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# A HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT DAY

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE RESTORATION

#### I

#### THE KING'S RETURN

THE great bulk of the nation hailed the restoration of Charles II. with delight. The Protectorate had been in effect a despotism, resting upon the support not of the nation but of the army which had itself represented the sectaries. It had been detested alike by the Cavaliers, by the mass of the Presbyterians, and by the Constitutionalists, whose cause had been that of the supremacy of parliament. Through the return of the king the Cavaliers hoped to obtain restitution if not revenge. The Presbyterians, while they knew that Anglicanism must be restored, nevertheless counted upon the extension of complete toleration to themselves. The Constitutionalists felt assured that there would be no attempts to resuscitate the claim of the Crown to arbitrary powers which had been abolished by statute before the actual outbreak of the Civil War. Even the sectaries acquiesced in view of the promises of toleration.

No one knew the mind of the new king, nor did he intend any one to know it. Throughout his reign he succeeded in completely hoodwinking not only the nation at large but his own ministers. For him there was one consideration which controlled all others—he did not intend to go on his travels again; therefore he would not set public opinion at defiance until he had placed his own power on a footing which would secure him against all risks. He intended to secure that power, and had no moral scruples whatever as to methods; but it was imperative that his purpose should not be suspected, and he concealed his deep political design under a mask of reckless frivolity which at once gave free play to his own natural inclinations and disarmed suspicion.

It was the business of the Convention—so called because, not having been summoned by the royal authority, it was not in strictly technical form a parliament—to deal only with the immediate settlement of the most urgent questions. It set about its task on the lines of compromise. The lands of Cavaliers which had been sequestered by the Commonwealth Government were restored, but the lands which had passed out of their possession by sale remained in the hands of the purchasers. An Act of Indemnity and Oblivion was passed, though it was denounced by the Cavaliers as one of indemnity for the king's enemies and oblivion for his friends, From



the general pardon regicides were formally excluded, though vindictiveness added to their number Sir Harry Vane, and went so far as to exhume the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw, the President of the High Court of Justice, in order to inflict upon them the penalties of treason. The claims of the soldiers to arrears of pay were met, and the Army itself was disbanded, though a fanatical outbreak of the group who called themselves Fifth

Monarchy men gave a warrant for the retention, in the interests of public order, of the regiments which had marched from Scotland with Monk, who were formed into the Coldstream Guards. It was not realised at the time, unless by Charles himself, that the nucleus of a Standing Army was thus provided.

At the same time the great question of taxation was definitely settled, somewhat on the lines of the "Great Contract" proposed by Robert Cecil fifty years before. The Crown was granted a fixed revenue, conferred for life, in return for which it surrendered all the old claims for feudal dues and for the imposition of indirect taxation—direct taxation was admittedly not within the power of the Crown. The revenue thus provided, being insufficient for the purposes of administration, required to be



Charles II.

[After the engraving by Vanderbanc.]

supplemented by parliamentary grants, and thus the suspension of parliament was rendered impossible. So at least it seemed, for the parliament had not reckoned that the King of England might obtain extraneous supplies by becoming the pensioner of the King of France. The arbitrary Courts of Justice, abolished in 1641, were dead, nor was there any attempt made to revive the claim of the Crown to the power of arbitrary imprisonment. The whole of the settlement by the Convention Parliament was in strict accordance with the constitutional principles which had been asserted by the Long Parliament while it was still a practically unanimous body.

The convention was an English parliament. The Protectorate had incorporated the legislatures of Scotland and Ireland with that of England.



The Restoration cancelled the Union; as before, Scotland and Ireland resumed their separate legislatures. They had acquiesced in the Union, not without some resentment, since in Scotland at least the incorporation was felt to be subordination, in spite of the commercial advantages accruing from the removal of commercial disabilities. The Union had not been the outcome of a national demand in any of the three countries; it had been a piece of policy on the part of the Government in England. Scotland demanded its dissolution, and Charles was well aware that it was to his personal advantage, to the advantage of the Crown, to have three kingdoms to deal with instead of one.

## II

## CLARENDON

The primary business of the Restoration was settled by the Convention. The acuteness of Charles and the shrewdness of his chief counsellor Edward Hyde, who was shortly afterwards made Earl of Clarendon, prevented it, by means of the amnesty and the land settlement, from being converted into a partisan triumph for the Cavaliers, while the disbanding of the Army removed all danger of armed insurrection. On the other hand, the revenue settlement made it impossible, for the time at least, that the Crown should attempt to dispense with parliaments. But Hyde had successfully postponed one question of vital importance, the settlement of the religious problem. This was to be dealt with by a new parliament regularly summoned by the king, not by the Convention. The Presbyterians were hardly nervous. They were carefully encouraged to believe that all would be well with them. There was to be a conference of divines as a preliminary to settlement, and in the meanwhile the king nominated leading Presbyterians among his private chaplains.

But bitter disappointment was in store. The Savoy Conference, the meeting of the divines, came to nothing. The Royalist reaction in the country resulted in the return of a Parliament in which there was a great preponderance of Cavaliers, many of them young men whose sympathies were vehemently Anglican and anti-Puritan. Clarendon himself was intensely Anglican. He had originally been prominent among the moderate Constitutionalists in the first days of the Long Parliament, and had led the resistance in the Commons to the Puritan attack upon the Episcopate and to the Grand Remonstrance. With Falkland he had joined the Royalists, had been a leading member of the councils of Charles I., and had remained the Chief Minister, if that term may be used, of Charles II. during his exile. Now, at the Restoration, he was not unfaithful to his old ideals. He was no advocate of absolutism, and his stiff solemnity made him distasteful to the Cavaliers, and especially to the court, which soon became notorious for its frivolity and



licentiousness. But he was at one with the Cavaliers in the determination to restore the supremacy of Anglicanism.

Clarendon's ecclesiastical policy took shape in the series of enactments which are known as the Clarendon Code. Already the spirit of the new parliament had made itself manifest. It restored the bishops to the House of Lords, and ordered the Solemn League and Covenant to be publicly burnt by the hangman, besides denouncing all levying of war against the king. The first measure of the Code, which came at the end of the year 1661, was the Corporation Act, which required every member of a corporation to renounce the Covenant, to affirm that it was unlawful to take arms against the king, and to take the Sacrament according to the rights of the Anglican



Edmund Hyde, Lord Clarendon.

[After the portrait by Loggan.]

Church. The Corporation Act was followed up by the Act of Uniformity, which required every incumbent who had not already received the Anglican ordination to do so before St. Bartholomew's Day. Ordination was to be in future the condition of holding any ecclesiastical preferment. The clergy were to declare their complete acceptance of everything laid down in the Prayer-book, and not only the clergy, but teachers of all sorts were to take the oaths required under the Corporation Act. An immense number of livings were now occupied by Presbyterians who had not received episcopal ordination. These men stood loyal to their convictions with a wonderful unanimity.

More than two thousand of them resigned their livings, and the great Presbyterian body became a sect outside the established Church ; that is, for the first time, the Nonconformists separated themselves definitely from the official ecclesiastical organisation.

The expulsion of the Presbyterians from the pulpits which they had so long occupied might have been excused as a warrantable retaliation for the expulsion of the Anglicans under the Puritan régime, although at the best it was a manifestly vindictive measure. It was a severe blow to Nonconformity ; still it left the Nonconformists free to worship as their own consciences prescribed. But two years after the Act of Uniformity came the Conventicle Act, which forbade, under severe penalties, all assemblies for public worship, under other forms than those of the Church, at which there were gathered more than four persons besides the members of the household.

Still more outrageous was the Five Mile Act, which followed the devastations of the Great Plague which fell upon London in 1665. During that year more than a hundred thousand persons died beneath that fearful scourge. Multitudes fled from London ; those who remained hardly dared to leave their houses lest they should come in contact with infection ; still less would



they dare to enter the house of their neighbour. In those terrible months the ejected ministers displayed a more splendid spirit of self-sacrifice than their Anglican successors, who failed in their dangerous duty. Fear that the Nonconformists would recover their ascendancy drove the parliament to pass a measure which forbade any Nonconformist minister or teacher to teach in schools or to come within five miles of any corporate town or parliamentary borough where he had officiated, under penalties of fine and imprisonment, while substantial rewards were given to informers who revealed breaches of the law. As was always the case in England the excuse put forward was that Nonconformity was used as a cloak for sedition.

Meanwhile Charles was leading the nation upon a course of foreign policy which he himself perfectly understood, though the nation did not. Charles wanted the personal friendship and support for himself of his cousin Louis XIV.; and Louis had designs not for the formation of a Protestant League, but for establishing a French domination in Europe. The Hapsburg ascendancy was to give place to that of the Bourbon. The price of Cromwell's alliance would have been that policy of toleration, if not of aggressive Protestantism, which had not been unacceptable to France while Oliver ruled in England. The price of Charles's alliance was not the pursuit of an ideal; it could be calculated in terms of the currency. It was necessary, however, to persuade the people of England to believe that the alliance was in their interest, and to conceal from them the terms upon which it rested. It would not suit Louis to see England closely allied with either Holland or Spain, and, unlike Louis, neither Holland nor Spain would give Charles their alliance on the necessary terms. The renewal of the Navigation Acts in a still stricter form repelled Holland, while Spain held out for the restitution of Dunkirk and Jamaica. But over and above alliance, Louis wanted from Charles merely the understanding that the king would do his best to reinstate Roman Catholicism, which Charles was quite ready to promise, while he asked in return the money which Louis did not grudge. Commercial rivalry weighed more than religious sentiment with popular opinion in England, so that it was easy to cultivate hostility towards the Dutch Republic, against which Charles himself bore grudges, not the least being the refusal of the dominant oligarchy to recognise the hereditary title to leadership in Charles's young nephew, William of Orange. All tradition also was opposed to alliance with Spain; and Charles played into the hands of Louis by choosing for his bride a princess of the house of Braganza, a dynasty still insecurely seated on the throne of Portugal, of which Spain claimed the crown.

The Portuguese marriage brought with the dowry of Catherine the possession of Bombay in India, and of Tangier on the coast of Africa; and the acquisition of Tangier gave Charles an additional excuse not for restoring Dunkirk to Spain, but for selling it to France. The transaction was unpopular, but it was fully sanctioned by Monk (now Duke of Albemarle) and the military authorities, who saw that its practical value could



be maintained only at an intolerable expense, and that in fact Tangier and Dunkirk could not both be effectively occupied.

Dutch and English were in a state of perpetual hostility on the high seas. The Dutch had planted in North America the colony of new Amsterdam, which formed a wedge between the Northern and Southern English colonies, while the English claimed that this territory was already theirs in right of earlier occupation. In the Indian Seas and in the Spice Islands the East India Companies of the two nations were perpetually at odds, and the strained relations, intensified by the Navigation Act, brought about the open declaration of war in 1665.

As in the case of the early war between the Commonwealth and the Dutch, this war was signalised by mighty naval battles, in which both sides fought with desperate obstinacy, and hardly inflicted defeats alternated with hardly won victories, which left it almost impossible to say that either of the combatants had the better of the other. Of these engagements the most famous were the first, a victory of the English led by the king's brother James, Duke of York, off Lowestoft, and the tremendous four days' battle of the Downs in the following year between Ruyter and Van Tromp on one side and Monk and Prince Rupert on the other, in which both sides claimed the victory, though the English losses were far heavier both in ships and in men. Yet six weeks after that great fight the Dutch were fairly defeated in another great battle. Nevertheless, between wanton wastage and real expenses the cost of the war was enormous. It came at the moment when London was devastated by the Plague, and the Plague was followed in 1666 by the tremendous three days' fire, which made of old London a heap of charred ruins. By way of economising, the authorities elected to lay up a large portion of the fleet, with the result that the triumphant Dutch sailed up the Medway, and the thunder of their guns was heard by the revellers of King Charles's court. How conscious the Dutch were of the illusory character of their triumph and of the shame they had inflicted upon England was shown by the Treaty of Breda, which was actually in course of negotiation at the time and was ratified a few weeks later. Both sides retained what they had actually won, and New Amsterdam was converted into New York.

Two other great consequences followed upon the war. The first was constitutional. Popular feeling had been wholly in favour of the war, and parliament at the outset voted very large supplies. The indignation was all the greater when it became apparent that the money was being scandalously squandered. But hitherto, while parliament had voted or refused to vote the supplies called for by the king and his ministers, it had hardly attempted to claim control over the actual expenditure. Now it insisted that the supplies voted for the war should be expended on the war. The principle of the "appropriation of supply" was for the first time laid down; that is, it was claimed that parliament could vote money for a particular object, and was entitled to see that that money should be spent upon that object and not





THE ATTACK ON CHATHAM BY THE DUTCH IN JUNE, 1667

From an etching by Romeyn de Hooghe in the Bodleian Library.





upon something else, a claim which involved parliamentary control over the national accounts.

The second consequence was a personal one; it led to the fall of Clarendon. He had been called to guide the affairs of state at a moment when the first necessity was the establishment of an equilibrium between parties still smarting and sore from the effects of a great civil war and a series of revolutionary governments, and of an equilibrium between the Crown and the parliament when Crown and parliament each was seeking so to manipulate affairs as to procure its own ascendancy. Partisanship would have won the minister a cheap popularity with one section or another of the opposing forces. Clarendon had given way to partisanship only on the



A view of London at the time of the Great Fire. 1666.

[From a print by Visscher.]

Church question. By so doing he had alienated the Puritans, but had not won popularity with the Cavaliers, or at least the courtiers, because he at the same time assumed the attitude of a censor of court manners and morals. He opposed the parliamentary claim to appropriation of supplies as an interference with the royal prerogative, and he opposed the claim put forward by Charles that the Crown could suspend the operation of the penal laws as unconstitutional. He was not responsible for the war or for its mismanagement, but popular opinion held him responsible for both. When the Dutch sailed up the Medway popular indignation demanded a scapegoat, and all parties found the most convenient scapegoat in Clarendon. He was threatened with impeachment, which he was prepared himself to face; but Charles, who was afraid of awkward revelations, persuaded him to flee from the popular wrath to France. He was impeached and condemned in his absence. In his exile he wrote his stately, and in some respects invaluable,



*History of the Great Rebellion.* The king was released from the hampering control of a mentor, who, however useful he might be on occasion, was exceedingly tiresome and uncomfortably exacting.

## III

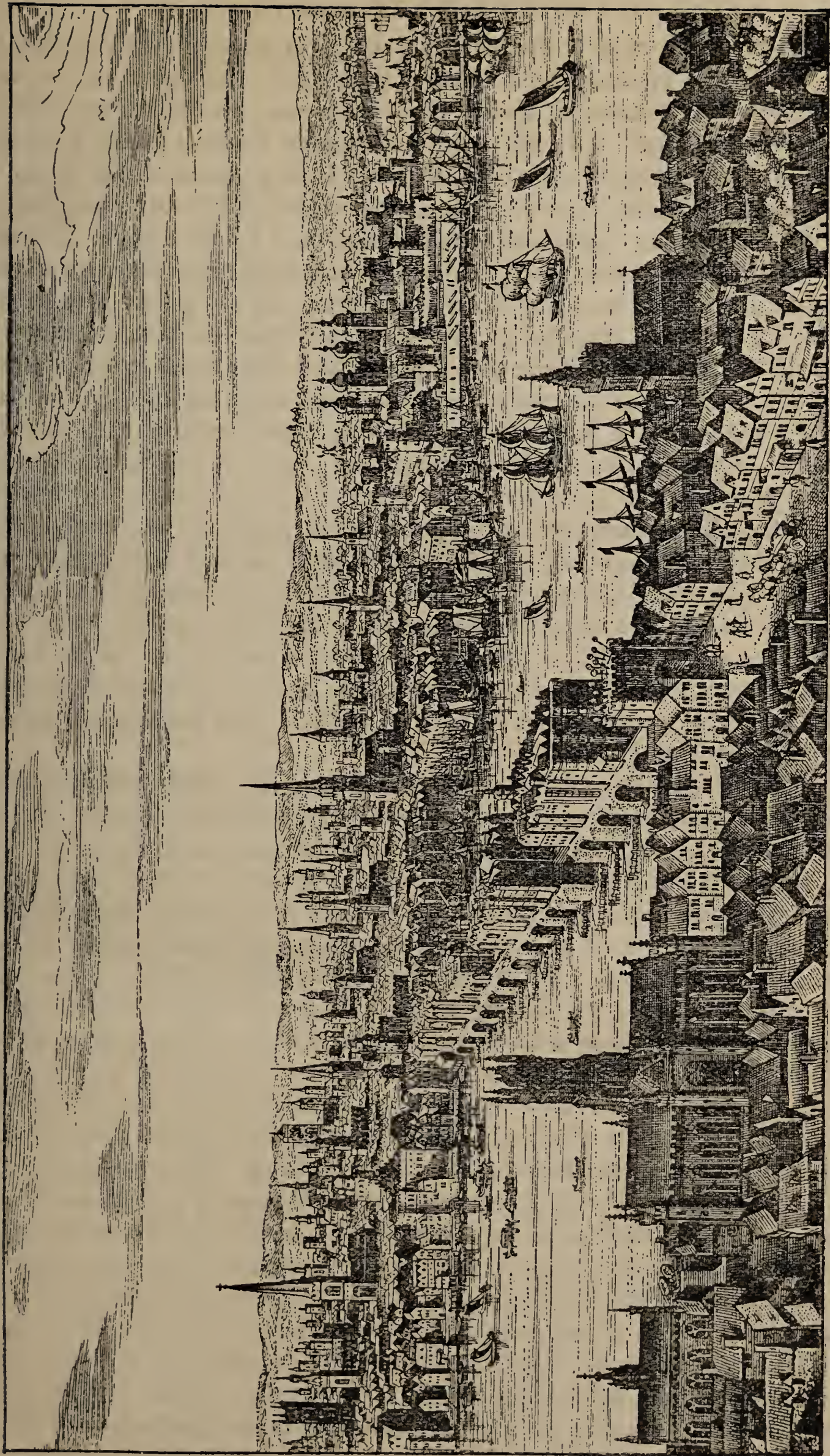
## THE CABAL AND DANBY

The executive government in the past had been in the hands of the Crown and the Privy Council. The character of the Restoration had made it necessary that both the old Roundheads and the Cavaliers should receive recognition from the king; and the general effect was the admission to the Privy Council of so many members from both groups that the body itself became too unwieldy to conduct the business of the State. The real business passed into the hands of a small informal committee, which began to be known as the Cabinet or Cabal. The name of the Cabal has become permanently associated with the group who formed this inner council after the fall of Clarendon, popular attention having fastened on the fact that their initials—Clifford, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington, Lauderdale—spell the word Cabal.

Parliament had not formed into definite parties, and the ministers did not represent a party. They were the men with whom the king concocted his designs or pretended to do so, and through whom he carried them to execution. Lauderdale managed Scotland. Ashley, who afterwards became Lord Shaftesbury, had sat in the Barebones Assembly. No man could have been less of a Puritan, nevertheless he associated himself politically with the Puritan antagonism to Clarendon and to Popery. Buckingham, the most profligate and resplendent member of a profligate and brilliant court, elected paradoxically enough to associate himself with the same political connection. Clifford and Arlington, like the king's brother James, Duke of York, were either actually Catholics or ready to become so. It was perhaps almost the strongest desire of Charles himself to reinstate the Roman Catholic religion and himself openly to join the Roman communion; to Louis XIV. he had probably already pledged himself to both these objects, though always with the proviso that he was not to be expected to sacrifice his crown for a Mass. The facts, if known to Clifford and Arlington, were carefully concealed from Ashley and Buckingham as well as from Lauderdale.

Now it was no easy matter for Charles to carry out his private designs. The only theory on which the French alliance could be made to appeal strongly to the English people was that which regarded France as a Protestant Power for political purposes, a Power opposed to aggressive Catholicism, a Power which held Hapsburg aggression in check. This was the theory on which Cromwell had undoubtedly entered upon the alliance. Louis had not up to the present time displayed animosity to Protestantism. But it was already clear that the French king had embarked on a policy of French





Southwark, London Bridge, the City and the Tower, in 1666.

[From Visscher's "General View of London."]



aggrandisement which was a menace not only to the Hapsburgs but to Europe at large. To Holland for a century past Spain had been the enemy, but Holland was just becoming aware that Spain was no longer capable of endangering her liberties. The Spanish Netherlands lay as a buffer between France and Holland; Louis coveted them, and if they passed from Spain to France, Holland would be in much more danger from her powerful neighbour than from distant Spain. Again, although Louis was by no means on good terms with the Papacy, it was being realised in some quarters that the centre of aggressive Catholicism was not the Papal Curia, but the Jesuit order. In fact the Papacy and the Hapsburgs, Austrian and Spanish, had completely departed from the ancient attitude of Philip II. and the Popes of Elizabeth's time. But the Jesuits had not departed from that attitude, and the Jesuits, now in disagreement with the Papal authority, were dominant in France. The time was coming, though it had not yet come, when Catholic and Protestant Powers would have to unite against the aggression of France, revealed as the open enemy of toleration. The position was not as yet generally grasped in England; but England was uneasy and restive on political more than on religious grounds. Louis had recently put forward a claim to provinces of the Spanish Netherlands on behalf of his wife, who was the elder sister of the infant King of Spain, the basis of the claim being certain local customs of succession which could not in the eyes of any one except Louis apply to the sovereignty. England was feeling extremely suspicious of Louis's ambitions.

Hence Charles found himself constrained to give open assent to the formation, through the diplomatic agency of Sir William Temple, of the Triple Alliance between England, Holland, and Sweden, with the ostensible object of inducing France and Spain to come to terms. That object was accomplished, since Louis was not at this stage prepared to defy such a coalition. But Charles had been careful to explain privately to his cousin that he was not a free agent in the matter. The Triple Alliance must be looked upon merely as a temporary check. The two kings entered on a course of secret negotiations which resulted in the most shameful compact in our annals. By the secret Treaty of Dover, of which the true details remained unknown until revealed by modern research, Charles undertook to join Louis in a war against Holland. In return for his alliance Charles was to receive substantial subsidies from the French king. This portion of the compact was confirmed by a treaty made in the following year to which all the members of the Cabal were privy; but the iniquity of the secret treaty lay in clauses which were concealed from Ashley and Buckingham. Charles pledged himself to reinstate the Roman Catholic religion and himself to join the Roman communion, as his brother James had already done, as well as Clifford. And the price of this pledge was the promise of a substantial pension, a sum down when the king's conversion should be publicly announced, and a guarantee that Charles should be supported by French troops if his subjects revolted.



Charles himself and all the members of the Cabal were advocates of toleration, though for different reasons. For the principle of toleration Charles cared nothing; he had no sympathy with Puritanism or the Puritans. But he and Clifford and Arlington were shrewd enough to perceive that it was hardly possible to seek for a relaxation of the laws against Roman Catholics without also relaxing those against Protestant dissent. Ashley and Buckingham, on the other hand, were allied to the dissenters. But the Cavalier parliament was hotly intolerant alike of Romanism and of Nonconformist Puritanism. Buckingham and, what was infinitely more important, Ashley were both duped by Charles, and, knowing nothing of the secret treaty, favoured the French alliance against the Dutch; relying upon the commercial advantages which would accrue and upon the sentiment of hostility to Holland, the desire to avenge the disgrace of the Medway affair, to make a Dutch war popular. To keep the hands of the government free parliament was prorogued from 1670 to 1673. In the interval the sham second treaty with France was negotiated; Charles, instigated by Ashley, who was made Earl of Shaftesbury and Lord Chancellor, issued a Declaration of Indulgence suspending the operation of the penal laws; and in 1672 war was declared in conjunction with France against Holland. "No clap of thunder on a fair frosty day could more astonish the world," wrote Temple in his memoirs.

The approach of war at a moment when it would have been dangerous to meet parliament drove the Cabal to a dangerous expedient. Government had, according to custom, obtained a temporary loan from the goldsmiths of about a million and a half, which was to be paid back when the taxes for the year were collected. The money in the treasury and the taxes for its repayment were now attached for the purposes of the war. The money which the goldsmiths had lent was to a great extent money which had been deposited with them by merchants. This "Stop of the Exchequer," as it was called, deprived them of the means of repaying the deposits, and widespread financial ruin resulted.

The war itself went ill. The Dutch, fighting single-handed and threatened with utter destruction by the combined attack of France and England, this time proved themselves a match for the united forces of their enemies on the sea; and when they were in danger of being overwhelmed by land fell back on their last defence—opened the dykes, and laid the country under water. A revolution swept away the oligarchy which controlled the State, and set at its head young William of Orange, who thus began his career as the implacable foe of Louis XIV.; but this same change also changed the attitude of Charles towards the Dutch Republic. William, the grandson of Charles I., stood next in succession to the English throne after the king's brother James and his daughters, for Charles's wife, Catherine of Braganza, had borne him no children. Charles hated the Dutch oligarchy; but a Holland dominated by William of Orange was another matter. In 1674 articles of peace were signed between Holland and England.



There were other reasons, too, which led to this result. In 1673 it had become no longer possible to repeat the prorogation of parliament, and parliament met in resentful mood. The royal prerogative had been asserted in a manner not to its liking. Clarendon of old had checked Charles's first attempt to exercise the dispensing power and to relieve individuals from religious penalties and disabilities. Now members returned, indignant, to find Roman Catholics in high favour. Very decisively parliament dispelled any illusions that may have existed in Charles's mind with regard to their hostility to Romanism by passing the Test Act, which required all persons



An English ship of war, *temp.* Charles II.  
[From a medal.]

holding public office to receive the Sacrament according to the Anglican rite and expressly to deny the Roman doctrine of Transubstantiation. The most intolerantly Anglican of parliaments was as bitterly Anti-Romanist as if it had been composed of Presbyterians. Even the Protestant dissenters made it obvious that they would rather submit to Corporation Acts and Five Mile Acts themselves than be relieved at the price of toleration for Papists. From that moment Charles, however reluctantly, entirely abandoned his design of reinstating Romanism, and the Declaration of Indulgence was formally withdrawn.

Louis may have recognised that circumstances were too strong for his cousin, but he realised at the same time that the purposes of the secret treaty were for the time being out of reach; he could not gravely resent the withdrawal of England from the Dutch War.

But the Test Act and the Peace of Westminster were not the only results of the reassembling of Parliament. The Test Act itself excluded from office the Duke of York and Clifford with other Roman Catholics. Shaftesbury, more than suspicious that the king had tricked him, went into opposition along with Buckingham. The Cabal was dissolved, and Charles called to his counsels the High Anglican and Cavalier, Sir Thomas Osborne, who was made Earl of Danby and Lord Treasurer.

From the Danby Administration may be dated the beginnings of the division of parliament into two organised parties, though they cannot as yet be defined as Ministerialists and Opposition, because some time was still to elapse before it became a matter of course that all the ministers of the Crown should be chosen from the one party. But although the principle of



forming a united ministry, with its corollary of collective responsibility, had not yet come into play, during the rest of the reign of Charles II. parliament was shaping itself into the two divisions which became known as the Court Party and the Country Party, and ultimately as Tories and Whigs. Now also was inaugurated that extensive system of party management, by the distribution of places and emoluments and still more flagrant forms of bribery, which so corrupted parliament during the ensuing century.

Charles chose Danby as the champion of Anglicanism and Royal Prerogative in spite of the fact that the minister was exceedingly hostile to France. For the time being it suited Charles very well to make a show of independence of Louis. He intended to make his bargain with the French king, but he could get improved terms, even at the cost of a temporary estrangement, though the estrangement must not go too far.

Shaftesbury was determining upon his line of policy, of which the primary aim was to be the exclusion of the Roman Catholic Duke of York from the succession to the throne, while the immediate design was to procure a dissolution in the expectation that a new parliament would set the country party decisively in the ascendant and compel the dismissal of Danby. But, when parliament met after an extended prorogation, Shaftesbury and Buckingham over-reached themselves in their opposition and were relegated to the Tower.

By this time Charles was in fact fencing with Louis. Danby was allowed to push forward his anti-French policy. The Princess Mary, the Protestant daughter of the Duke of York, and heir-presumptive to the throne if she should outlive her father, was married to William of Orange, Holland being still at war with France; and Danby joyfully believed that England would now be carried into the war on the side of Holland. But Danby was to be disappointed. Through the first half of 1678 elaborate intrigues were going on. Louis wanted to bring his Dutch war to an end. He was in communication with sundry leaders of the Opposition in England, who, while they could not risk the unpopularity of openly opposing a French war, were bent on the overthrow of Danby, who was conspicuously identified with the war policy. On the other hand, Charles merely wanted to use the threat of war in order to extract better terms for himself from the French king. By Charles's orders and very much against his own will Danby was compelled to write to the English ambassador at Paris offering English aid in bringing the war to a close for a substantial cash consideration. A secret treaty was ultimately framed, under which Charles was to get his money and was to disband the troops then being raised for the war, conditions which gave to Charles what he most wanted and to the Opposition leaders what they most wanted, while Louis made his terms with the Dutch without English intervention. But the letter which Danby had written was presently to be employed as an instrument in procuring his fall.



## IV

## THE POPISH PLOT AND THE EXCLUSION BILLS

So far the country party had been baffled. They had been unable to obtain either the overthrow of Danby or the dissolution of the parliament which had been sitting for seventeen years. Although the Triennial Act of the Long Parliament was in force, requiring that the Houses should meet at least every three years, there was no statutory provision limiting the time during which a parliament once summoned might remain undissolved. Nor



"Dr. Oates discovereth the plot to ye King and Council."

[From a 17th century playing card.]

were the Opposition now (1678) provided with any really effective cry for attacking the Government. Failing aid from the High Gods, they moved the Powers of Acheron, or the Powers of Acheron moved on their behalf. Charles learnt that the ordinarily sober English people were capable of going perfectly mad on one subject, and that subject was Popery. With singular opportuneness for Shaftesbury, the No Popery frenzy laid sudden grip upon the nation. Titus Oates invented, and, having invented, revealed the popish plot.

Oates was an unspeakable knave who, being the son of a Baptist minister, had himself disgraced the Anglican Church by taking Orders, and had then joined the Church of Rome. Among the Jesuits he had gleaned enough to suggest to him the fabrication of a portentous and elaborate lie, having in it a leaven of truth, just sufficient to save it from immediate detection. The Jesuits had given up hope of the conversion of England by Charles, and were fondly anticipating the accession to the throne of his brother James, who had long been an avowed member of the Roman Church. Incidentally, Oates ascertained that a Jesuit meeting had been held on April 24. Oates proceeded to lay information before the king of the Jesuit plot for his murder. The city of London was to be provided with another great fire, Ireland was to be roused to insurrection, French troops were to come over, and there was to be a general massacre of Protestants. A copy of this declaration was lodged by the informers with a magistrate of the highest character, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey. Oates was summoned before the Council, and stuck to his statements, though the king at least was perfectly satisfied that he was lying. Private papers were seized which implicated Father Coleman, who was officially the secretary of the Duke of York's wife, in what was certainly treasonable if futile plotting. The papers confirmed some of Oates's statements and were consequently regarded as proving his veracity.

In the wild panic which ensued, every lie produced by every informer was



swallowed with avidity. Godfrey was found murdered in a ditch, and though nothing was ever proved, the frenzied public assumed that he had been murdered by the Jesuits. Catholics and suspected Catholics were swept into prison and condemned to death after a mockery of trial. Nobody dared to raise hand or voice in an attempt to check the popular rage. A bill was carried and received the royal assent for the exclusion of Catholics from the House of Peers, the Duke of York alone being excepted by a bare majority of two votes. A direct attack on the succession of James was only evaded by the king's assurance that he would accept restrictions of the prerogative for a successor who was not a Protestant—for which James never forgave Danby. Then in order that the king might marry again a wife who might bear him a son and so shut James out of the succession, Oates brought a charge against the unlucky queen and her physician of attempting to poison Charles, which was probably instigated by Shaftesbury. But Charles drew the line at this monstrous accusation against the wife whom he so shamelessly wronged. The charge against her was dropped, and the Chief-Justice, with the help of a conscientious and valiant jury, acquitted the accused physician.

The attack on James's succession had failed, and Danby was not even shaken; but at this stage the vindictiveness of the French king came into play. Danby's letter, before referred to, was produced and read in the House of Commons. The secret bargaining with France was revealed. It was of no avail that the letter had been written by the king's order, as attested by his own hand-writing. The doctrine of ministerial responsibility was definitely laid down. The king could do no wrong, but the minister who did wrong in his name could not shelter himself from punishment behind the king's authority. Danby was impeached.

For eighteen years the king had abstained from dissolving the Cavalier Parliament, although it had never been subservient to the royal authority, and had been increasingly insistent on its own; Charles had always been shrewd enough to perceive that a new parliament would probably be more, not less, hostile. But the only chance of saving Danby now was that a new parliament might after all be more amenable. The Cavalier parliament was dissolved.

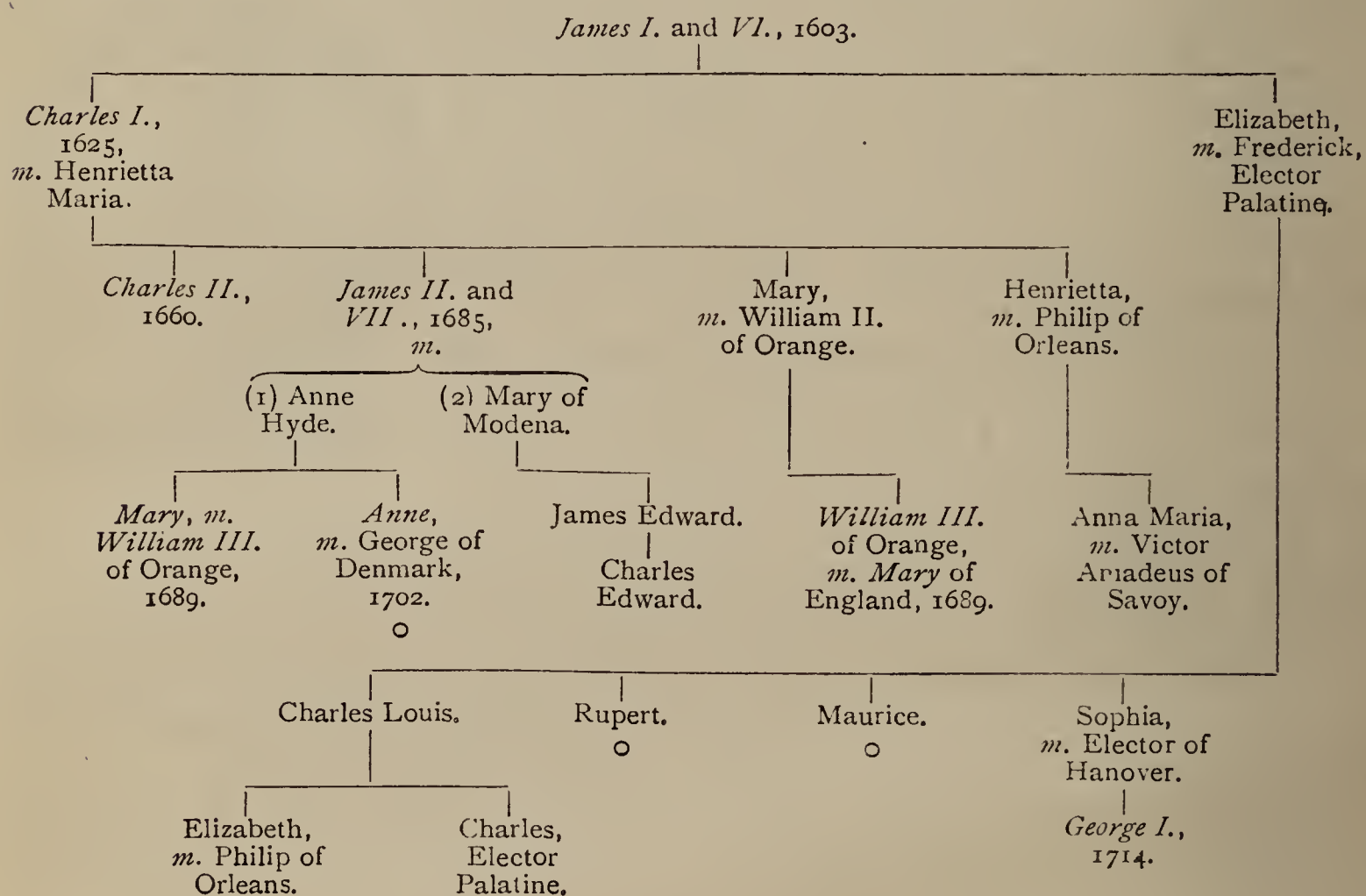
The new parliament was not more amenable. Shaftesbury had a large majority in the Commons, and Danby was again impeached. Thereupon he produced a royal pardon which stayed the proceedings; but the threat of a Bill of Attainder drove Charles to dismiss him from office, and to lodge him in the Tower lest worse should befall. At the suggestion of Sir William Temple an academic device was adopted to avoid a deadlock. The king dismissed the whole of his Privy Council and appointed a new Council of thirty members, fifteen being officers of State, while the other fifteen were



Contemporary Medal of the Godfrey murder.

non-official. A preponderance was given to Shaftesbury and his followers ; but for practical purposes the new scheme was still-born. The king still ruled through ministers of his own selection. On the other hand, a new Exclusion Bill was introduced and passed by the House of Commons ; James was declared incapable of succeeding to the Crown, which, in the event of the king dying without male issue, was to pass to the nearest Protestant heir. Charles was determined not to allow the exclusion of his brother, and he prorogued the parliament, but not till it had passed, almost if not quite by accident, the Habeas Corpus Act. In principle there was nothing new in the measure. Theoretically an accused person could procure a writ of Habeas Corpus

### THE SUCCESSION AFTER CHARLES II.



which required that he be either brought up for trial or set at liberty. But the lawyers had discovered devices enough by which the issuing of the writs could be deferred almost indefinitely. The new Act required that trial or release should take place within a definite time after application for the writ. There is good reason for believing Burnet's story that the majority of nine which passed the bill in the House of Lords was really a minority, the tellers by way of a jest having counted one particularly fat lord as ten.

But the Opposition were already divided. Shaftesbury, bent on the exclusion of James, had determined to fix the succession on the Duke of Monmouth, an illegitimate son of the king, who enjoyed high favour with his father and general popularity in the country. The great difficulty in the way was that Charles himself could not be induced to say that Monmouth's



mother had actually been his lawful wife. Another section, headed by Halifax and Sunderland, objected to the Monmouth candidature, and sought rather to impose close restrictions on the royal power if enjoyed by Roman Catholics. The ultimate succession was by their plan retained for the Duke's daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange. The Halifax group had enraged Shaftesbury by supporting the prorogation; they now urged the king to a dissolution, and the king acted on their advice. Fortune had just favoured Charles by giving him a new lease of popularity. He was seized with an illness so severe that his life was despaired of, and the country suddenly realised that there was every prospect that his death would plunge it into civil war over the succession question. Charles, however, recovered.

A new parliament met in October, only to be immediately prorogued to the following January (1680), and then prorogued again. The prorogations broke up the Halifax group. Petitions poured in, demanding that the Houses should be assembled, and were met by counter-resolutions from the king's supporters, whence for a time the two parties were known as the Petitioners and Abhorrrers, since the counter-resolutions expressed "abhorrence" of the petitions. But in the course of the year these nicknames were finally displaced by the appellations of "Whig" and "Tory," the names commonly applied to Scottish Covenanters and Irish brigands. When the parliament did at last meet in October, an Exclusion Bill was once more passed by the House of Commons, but the debating skill of Halifax procured its defeat in the Lords. The Commons were furious, turned upon Halifax, and threatened to refuse supplies unless their demands were satisfied.

The calculating coolness with which the king faced the crisis cannot but command admiration. The belief was general that his refusal would bring about civil war; but Charles rightly judged that Shaftesbury was not the man to play the part of Pym and Hampden, however furiously he might threaten. Moreover, in the last resort, the king had what his father had never possessed, and what the Whigs did not possess now, a standing army. There were the household troops in England and a large force in Scotland, besides the troops which held Tangier. He did not give way, but dissolved parliament, and summoned a new one to meet at Oxford in March 1681.

Charles had tried to counteract popular hostility by an appearance of antagonism to France. It was now apparent that he could not win upon those lines. The moment had come for a final bargain with Louis. The bargain was made. Louis would give him an adequate pension if he ruled without parliament at all, and lent himself to the French king's policy.

It was of set purpose that Charles had selected Oxford instead of London as the gathering place of the parliament. No parliament sitting at Westminster could escape the consciousness of pressure from the force of public opinion in London. Shaftesbury had systematically organised the City; a hint from him might easily raise a riot of a very dangerous kind. Oxford was safe. The undergraduates were not in residence, and the atmosphere of



the place was extremely royalist. The colleges were filled with the members of the two Houses, and the town swarmed with their retainers, flaunting the Whig and Tory colours. The Houses were met with a final proposal for a compromise. The king would not assent to any deviation from the legitimate rule of hereditary succession, but he would consider anything short of exclusion. A definite scheme was submitted which probably originated with Halifax. James was to become king of England if he survived his brother, but his kingship was to be merely nominal. He himself was to be banished from the country, and the royal functions were to be discharged by a regent. That regent was to be his elder daughter Mary, and, failing Mary, his younger daughter Anne. The two princesses, it must be noted, were the daughters of James's first wife, Anne Hyde, Clarendon's daughter, and both adhered to the Anglican form of religion in which they had been brought up. If the Duke's second wife, the Roman Catholic Mary of Modena, should bear him a son, and that son were brought up as a Protestant, the regency would cease when he came of age.

Charles knew perfectly well that Shaftesbury and his following would not accept that compromise; had it not been so he would probably not have made the offer. Shaftesbury imagined it to be a last desperate attempt to save the situation; if Charles would agree to those terms it could only be because he felt himself beaten. Shaftesbury had his own offer; let the king put an end to the discord by acknowledging Monmouth. The king refused to acknowledge Monmouth; the Commons refused to adopt the regency scheme. Once more Shaftesbury brought in the Exclusion Bill. Charles, urbane as usual, interested himself in the arrangements for finding the Commons better accommodation for their debates in the Sheldonian Theatre, in place of the cramped chamber which they now occupied. Only the inner ring of the king's advisers had a suspicion of his intentions.

On the Monday morning the Lords assembled at their meeting place in the Geometry Schools. Thither the king betook himself privately, his state robes being conveyed in a separate sedan chair. All suspicions had been lulled. The Whigs had no fear of Louis; he had kept his own counsel, and his money was jingling in not a few of their pockets. A summons came to the Commons to attend at the bar of the House of Lords; they came in gleeful anticipation that Charles was about to announce his surrender. They knew nothing of those robes of state which had been carried so secretly to the Geometry School, the robes he must wear in pronouncing the dissolution of parliament, the robes he was wearing when they entered the chamber. The king spoke; the thunderbolt fell. When he ceased speaking there was no longer a parliament. And no other parliament was called until his successor was on the throne. Charles had sold himself to the French king, and it mattered nothing to him that the constitutional source of supply was closed. The sword upon which the House of Commons had relied was snapped at the hilt. Shaftesbury saw that the game was lost. The king would not have dared to act as he had done without the certainty that he



held the winning cards. To attempt an armed rebellion would have been madness. In impotent rage and fear the discomfited Whigs scattered to their homes.

## V

## SCOTLAND

For Scotland the era of the Restoration was a period of storm and stress. In that country the return of Charles II. was to the full as popular as in England. The country in general had remained loyal to the theory of a monarchy, and clung to the royal house which had inherited the English Crown, although the sentiment of loyalty was combined with a deep-rooted insistence on the national religion. Republicanism and incorporation with the Commonwealth had inevitably been accepted after the battle of Worcester; but the return of the Stuart king and independence of England were generally welcomed except by the extreme section of Covenanters, who were to be found for the most part in the western Lowlands.

But Scotland had to pay a heavy price for the restoration of the monarchy and of national independence. She at once lost the commercial advantages of the Union. Her shipping had enjoyed all the advantages of the Commonwealth Navigation Act; and of these she was at once deprived by the Navigation Act of the Convention Parliament in England, which confined the carrying trade to English bottoms. Moreover, while in England the Restoration ostensibly established a constitutional government under parliamentary control, in Scotland it in effect established despotism. Further, while the old despotism had been checked under Charles I. by the alienation of the magnates from the Crown and their consequent alliance with the Kirk, the Kirk had now alienated the magnates, who had gone over to the Crown. Even the very large body among the clergy, of moderates who were known as Resolutioners, failed to make their influence practically felt with the Government.

There were few actual victims of the Restoration. Argyle was naturally singled out for vindictive treatment; his execution was legally inexcusable, though it was not difficult to regard it in the light of a just retribution for the death of Montrose. By the disappearance of Argyle the old Covenanters were left without a leader among the lay magnates. After a short but sharp rivalry between the thorough-going Cavalier Middleton and the ex-Covenanter Lauderdale, the former was defeated, and Lauderdale secured the virtual control of the Scottish government, which he retained for nearly twenty years.



Archibald Campbell, Marquis of Argyll.

[From the portrait by George Jamesone.]



Like the English Puritans, the Scottish Covenanters had used their power too aggressively ; in high places the reaction was complete. The clergy for the most part held to their principles, though some, like James Sharp, made haste to agree with the enemy while they were in the way with him. Sharp had been sent to London in the interests of Presbyterianism ; he returned to Scotland a convert to Episcopalianism. The parliament which met in 1661 was, after the manner of Scottish parliaments, an instrument which worked the will of the effective government, and the effective government consisted of the king's ministers and Privy Council. They wiped out all legislation subsequent to the bishops' wars, and left the religious settlement to the Crown. The Crown, which at the moment meant Middleton rather than Lauderdale, restored Episcopacy, and Sharp was made Archbishop of St. Andrews. Office-holders were required to denounce the Covenant and to affirm the doctrine of non-resistance. Broadly speaking the constitution of Church and State stood where they had stood thirty years before, but in both the power of the Crown was less assailable than it had been at the earlier date.

Against this system there was no national uprising like that which had produced the bishops' war. But in Scotland, as in England, the ecclesiastical settlement drove a large number of ministers to resign their livings for conscience' sake ; though the liturgy was not enforced, the principle at stake was the one always dominant in Scottish ecclesiastical politics, spiritual independence. In the south-west the Covenanting spirit was roused to a stubborn defiance, whilst the laws against Nonconformity were enforced by the government even more rigorously than the Clarendon Code was applied by Cavalier magistrates in England.

The hostility of the Galloway Covenanters, already displayed by the process of "rabbling" ministers who had taken the places of those who had given up their manse, came to a head in the Pentland rising at the end of 1666. Following on a scuffle with the soldiery engaged in breaking up conventicles, a band of insurgents assembled in arms. Thomas Dalziel, a brutal veteran whose service in Russia had taught him an exceptional savagery, was placed in command of the government troops. The insurgents marched to Edinburgh under the delusion that the capital would side with them. They had hardly discovered their mistake when they were caught and routed by Dalziel at the fight of Rullion Green.

The Pentland rising was followed by a sharp persecution directed against those who were supposed to have fostered the rebellion. Torture—the boot and the thumbscrew—was freely used, though with little success, as a means of extracting information, and some scores of offenders were put to death. These things had taken place in the absence of Lauderdale. He had personally taken the line of rather discouraging persecution, and allowing the odium of that policy to be borne by his colleague and rival Lord Rothes and Archbishop Sharp. The practical outcome was that Lauderdale now became supreme. He at once procured from a subservient parliament an Act definitely establishing the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown, a measure



little to the liking of the bishops, and still more objectionable to the Presbyterians with their doctrine of spiritual independence. But the Act also affirmed that the entire administrative control was a prerogative of the Crown; and with this instrument in his hands Lauderdale set himself to a still harsher penal legislation enforced by an increasing standing army virtually controlled by himself. Disaffection developed along with the severity of the government, especially when it was demanded that the landholders should bind themselves, together with their families, servants, and tenants, not to attend conventicles or to harbour unlicensed preachers. To suppress the disaffection an army of ten thousand men, mainly from the Highlands, was quartered upon the disturbed districts, where the "Highland host" treated the population very much as conquering troops were wont to treat a hostile country in seventeenth-century warfare.

The results were such as might have been expected. A party of desperadoes were lying in wait for an informer on Magus Muir near St. Andrews when accident threw Archbishop Sharp into their hands. They murdered him before the eyes of his daughter. Four weeks later a sympathising band of Covenanters routed at Drumclog a party of soldiers under the command of James Graham of Claverhouse, who had been actively employed by the government in the suppression of conventicles and the dispersal of open-air gatherings.

There was no organised rebellion. The victors of Drumclog were for the most part zealots, of whom a large proportion applauded the murder of Sharp, while probably every one of them would have sheltered the murderers as a matter of course. But there would have been no rebellion at all, organised or otherwise, if the population had not been goaded by the tyrannical harshness of the law and the brutalities of the troops in government employ. The command in Scotland was placed in the hands of the Duke of Monmouth, whose rôle it was to seek popularity. Three weeks after Drumclog the insurgents were dispersed at the battle of Bothwell Brig, where four hundred of them were killed and more than a thousand prisoners were taken. Very few of them were put to death, but most of them were kept through the winter in wooden sheds in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, where they suffered very severely. Then the majority were allowed to go home on pledging themselves to keep the peace, though some were obstinate enough to refuse the promise.

Monmouth got general credit for his leniency; but immediately afterwards he was removed from his office, and his place was taken by the Duke of York. Practically at this stage (1680) James became the governor of Scotland instead of Lauderdale, with Dalziel in command of the troops. A steady persecution set in which found its warrant in the action of the extreme leaders of the Covenanters, Cargill and Cameron, from whom the zealots soon came to be known as "Cameronians." This section issued the Declaration of Sanquhar, in which all allegiance to Charles Stuart was renounced.



The Cameronians in fact elected to declare themselves rebels, and as such the government treated them. A rational leniency would in all probability have resulted in effective pacification; but the government chose to enforce the law with the utmost rigour, while the rebels openly declared their own intention of retaliation. The persecution of the Covenanters throughout the ensuing years is a very ugly chapter of history, luridly depicted thirty years afterwards in the narratives of Wodrow and Walker. But even here the theory of the government was that the victims were avowed rebels; and deeply as the name of Graham of Claverhouse has been execrated, no instance has ever been brought home to him in which he exceeded the positive instructions under which he was acting, or executed any one who had not refused to abjure the declaration against allegiance. The suppression of conventicles was monstrous; the subjection of obviously harmless persons to the death penalty was monstrous; but the blame lies on the shoulders of the government, and to some extent on the zealots themselves, rather than on the officers who carried out their orders.

## VI

## THE VICTORY OF THE CROWN

The rout of the Whigs, when the Oxford parliament was dissolved, was complete. The acute Charles, who, when he gave his mind to business, probably had a keener insight than any man in England, had realised that Shaftesbury was ruining his own cause by claiming too much. In that course Charles deliberately encouraged him by his professed readiness to make such concessions as had been offered at the last parliament. The adoption of the Monmouth candidature was a fatal error, since, despite the Duke's popularity, the world at large did not seriously believe that he was legitimate, and the country could not be united upon a proposal to set a bastard on the throne. Moreover, Charles realised that a reaction against the popish terror was already setting in. Men were awaking with shame to the consciousness that they had completely lost their heads and had been guilty of flagrant and unreasoning injustice; and they were angry with the men who had encouraged the panic. Popular opinion had swung round, and the discomfiture of Shaftesbury's party, with its strong majority in the House of Commons, aroused no indignation.

Had the country known either of the old Treaty of Dover or of the latest agreement between Charles and Louis, matters would have gone very differently; but there were not half-a-dozen men in the country who were in either of those secrets. Charles had indeed a difficult task in keeping faith with France without arousing suspicions; but it was one to which his consummate powers of deception were quite equal. He could prove to his Dutch nephew that he could not join a league against Louis without appealing to parliament, and he could not appeal to parliament without having to



face either a new Exclusion bill or at best a bill which would seriously limit his successor's prerogative; and neither of those alternatives was at all to the taste of James's son-in-law and prospective heir. At home the safe policy was to revive the sentiment of Anglican royalism which had been so active in the early years of the reign, and to avoid injudicious movements in the direction of toleration either of Puritan dissenters or Romanists.

Still it was necessary for Charles to obtain further securities for the royal power. A time might come when, in spite of his present comfortable relations with Louis, he might be obliged to face the parliament; and in the meanwhile his control over the Courts of Justice was not such as he desired. The judges might be as subservient as those of his father, but his father's arbitrary Courts had been abolished, and juries might, and did, prove independent. When Shaftesbury was charged with treason a London Grand Jury threw out the bill in defiance of the directions they received from the judge. Whiggery was inconveniently prevalent in the boroughs; the corporations would be only too likely to return Whig members to a parliament if summoned, and the corporation officers would empanel juries disagreeably imbued with Whig traditions.

But all this could be remedied. When the government procured the appointment of Tory sheriffs for the city, Tory juries were secure, and Shaftesbury promptly removed himself out of danger to Holland. What Charles required was to obtain control of the corporations. Writs of *Quo Warranto* were issued to inquire into the authority by which the corporations, beginning with the City of London, exercised their powers and privileges. It was not difficult to show that the actual powers conveyed by the charters had been transgressed, and charter after charter was forfeited or surrendered; to be restored, with this vital change, that the corporation officers were appointed either by direct nomination of the Crown or subject to the Crown's control instead of by free election of the burgesses.

While the boroughs were being robbed of their independence and were in effect being transformed into instruments of despotism, Whig mismanagement was playing into the king's hands. The clear policy for the party to follow was to drop Monmouth, ally itself with William and Mary, and trust to the indiscretion of Louis XIV. or of the Duke of York to provide it with the certain means of exciting public opinion once more against the succession of James and association with France. Even before the flight of Shaftesbury, which was shortly followed by his death, the Whig leaders were taking the opposite course of encouraging Monmouth to court popular favour. The real ruin was wrought, however, not by the leaders, but by the irresponsible hot-heads who in 1683 concocted the Rye House Plot. Charles and James were to be seized and perhaps to be assassinated on their way from Newmarket to London. The plot was betrayed, and although it had been carefully concealed from the Whig leaders, several of them were charged with complicity.

The Earl of Essex committed suicide in the Tower. Enough evidence



of Russell's association with some of the plotters was found to warrant his condemnation by a partisan court. The great scandal was in connection with the doom of Algernon Sidney, against whom only one witness could be produced, though the law of treason required two. But among his papers was found an essay in favour of republicanism. It had not even been published, but it was admitted as the equivalent for the necessary second witness. Sidney was condemned and executed. The subsequent indignation at this travesty of justice was for the time being suppressed by the present indignation at an assassination plot.

The Court became more popular than it had been at any period of the reign ; repeated breaches of the Test Act and Corporation Acts were allowed to pass unchallenged ; high Anglican doctrines of non-resistance to the royal authority predominated on all sides, and Tory magistrates applied the persecuting Acts against dissenters with renewed energy. In the spring of 1684 Charles felt himself strong enough to refuse to summon a parliament, in defiance of the Triennial Act, and even although the boroughs were now so completely in his hands that he would have been sure of a subservient House of Commons. Danby and certain Roman Catholic lords who had been confined in the Tower at the time of the Popish plot were set at liberty, although they had hitherto been detained on the ground that they had been committed to prison by parliament, and that only the authority of parliament could release them. In defiance of the Test Act, James was restored to his old office at the head of the Admiralty. In the general paralysis it mattered little that the voice of England was silent on continental affairs, and that Tangier was finally abandoned.

Charles had won the game ; but no time was given to him to follow up his victory. In February 1685 he was seized with apoplexy. On his deathbed he received the last Sacraments as a member of the Church of Rome. Monmouth was out of the country, and James II. succeeded to the crown unchallenged. The "merry monarch" preserved to the last his reputation with the nation as a good-natured *fainéant*

"Who never said a foolish thing  
And never did a wise one—"

a popular reputation which survived for a century and a half, an unparalleled example of triumphant dissimulation.



## CHAPTER XIX

### NEMESIS

#### I

#### QUEM DEUS VULT PERDERE—

THE position created by the accession of James II. was decidedly paradoxical. England, Ireland, and Scotland were officially Protestant States, in which Roman Catholics were not only barred by the law from holding any public office, whether in the service of the State or of the municipality, but were further penalised for participating in their own religious rites, and for abstaining from participation in the rites of a Church which they accounted heretical. Yet at the head of these Protestant States was a zealous Roman Catholic, who, long after reaching maturity, had deliberately chosen to separate himself from the official established religion and to join the proscribed body. In Ireland it is true that he shared the faith of the great bulk of the population, but in England and in Scotland Protestantism was not merely official; to the bulk of the population the papacy was the Scarlet Woman of the Apocalypse. It was tolerably manifest that the king was bound to demand at least some relaxation in the stringency of the laws against his own co-religionists; but it was no less manifest that concessions could be procured only by tact and maintained or extended only by the exercise of conspicuous moderation.



James II.

[After the engraved portrait by Giffart.]

On the other hand, the masterly dissimulation of Charles II. had enabled him to leave the Crown stronger than it had been at any time since the



death of Elizabeth. A standing army had been created which, if not large, was still large enough, so long as it remained loyal, to secure the king against any serious danger from armed insurrection. For supplies it was true that, unless the king held fast to a policy of extreme economy, he was dependent on the goodwill either of the King of France or of parliament. But the Commons at least were no longer an independent body. County representation was controlled by the country gentlemen who were mainly Tories, and the reconstruction of the corporations had given the Crown the practical control over the boroughs where otherwise Whiggery would have predominated. The clergy of the established religion, moreover, were for the most part committed to doctrines of divine right and of non-resistance. An unobtrusive extension of the principles of toleration ought not to have been out of reach.

Unfortunately for himself and for his cause, James was personally wholly unfitted for his task. He was of all men the most tactless, in a position where tactfulness was a supreme necessity. His incapacity for successful dissimulation had procured him a somewhat spurious reputation for straightforward honesty, but that extremely useful reputation he failed to maintain. As a young man he had been conspicuously fearless in the battle-field, but while he had all the obstinacy which tends to produce crises, he lacked the nerve to face a crisis when it arrived. Within three years of his accession he had successfully alienated all that loyalty which Whig blundering, the crafty duplicity of Charles, and some fortunate accidents had combined to place at his disposal. The revolution of 1688 was a Whig triumph, but it was brought about by royalist Tories and Anglicans not less than by the Whigs. And for that fact the blundering of James himself was chiefly responsible.

Nevertheless the king's first acts had an encouraging aspect. His first declarations affirmed his intention of proving his loyalty to the existing order. The ministers most employed by Charles in his last years had been Rochester, Sunderland, and Godolphin. Although the two latter had both supported the Exclusion Bill they were retained in high office. Rochester had opposed exclusion, like Halifax, but, being Clarendon's son, he represented the tradition of political Anglicanism; he too was retained as Lord Treasurer. It was true that James paraded his own personal adherence to Romanism, but as yet the public at large were content to attribute this not to sinister intentions but to an open honesty. The merciless punishment inflicted upon Titus Oates and his principal accomplice was generally accepted as a mere act of justice; nor was any active resentment aroused when James proceeded to order by royal proclamation the collection of the Customs which had been accorded to Charles for life but had not yet been conferred by parliament on his successor.

Within five months of James's accession the strength of his position had been completely demonstrated. In Scotland the Scottish Estates were convened; and although they emphatically confirmed all the existing statutes



for the security of Protestantism, they increased the severity of the laws against conventicles, extending the application of the death penalty, and introducing that worst period of the persecution known to Scottish tradition as the "Killing Time." In May an English parliament assembled, and the House of Commons showed an overwhelming Tory preponderance. An emphatic declaration on the king's part that he would defend the Church sufficed to secure the enthusiastic loyalty of the Commons. The revenue granted to Charles was renewed to James, and a further large grant was made for naval purposes.

Meanwhile the extreme Whigs, the Exclusionists, who had taken flight from the country after their final rout, made their own desperate attempt. Argyle landed in Scotland and sought to raise an insurrection which was promptly crushed with complete ease; Argyle himself was captured and executed. While the insurrection in the North was collapsing Monmouth landed at Lyme Regis, the south-western corner of Dorsetshire. He asserted his own legitimacy, while professedly leaving his title to the Crown to be decided by parliament. His pose was that of the champion of Protestantism and generally of the constitutional principles advocated by the Whigs. The appeal to Protestantism was effective among the rural



The Sedgemoor Campaign, 1685.

population of Somerset and Devon, who flocked to his standard, ill enough armed but full of enthusiasm. But the Whig magnates did not join him, and he destroyed such chance as he had by deserting his first position and proclaiming himself king. Monmouth's valiant rustic levies met the king's troops at Sedgemoor, where they were completely routed in spite of the stubborn valour of their resistance. Monmouth himself was caught and carried prisoner to London, where an Act of Attainder had already been passed against him, and he was as a matter of course executed after unedifying appeals for mercy, which were rejected by the king with equally unedifying harshness.

The king's lack of nerve was shown not only by his alarm on the occasion of Monmouth's rising but by his encouragement of a vile vindictiveness in the punishment of the West Country which followed its very easy suppression. The savageries of "Kirke's Lambs," the troops just returned from Tangier, were only the precursors of the brutalities of Jeffreys, who was sent to conduct the judicial campaign. Foul-mouthed abuse of accused persons and bullying of witnesses smoothed the way for the scandalous sentences which have stamped the memory of Judge Jeffreys with indelible infamy, and have given to his proceedings the name of the Bloody Assize. The number of persons put to death exceeded three hundred, and nearly



three times as many were transported to convict slavery in the West Indies.

Unwittingly, however, Monmouth had done almost the worst possible disservice to James and the best service to Protestantism and constitutionalism that he could possibly have rendered, by getting himself executed. Monmouth was the rock on which the Whigs had split. The moment Monmouth was out of the way every one who was ill content turned his thoughts to the Dutch Stadtholder and his Stuart wife, the heiress-presumptive of the English throne. Neither nobles nor gentry nor commons in England would take up arms to set the crown of England on the head of the son of Lucy Waters merely because a number of Whig leaders had chosen to pretend to believe in his legitimacy. If James had had the wit to spare Monmouth, as his brother would have done in the like case, James's antagonist would have found it exceedingly difficult to procure the intervention of the Prince of Orange. But vindictiveness blinded James to the more subtle policy, and by his own act he smoothed the way for his supplanter.

Before parliament, which was prorogued in the summer, met again in the winter, other events had taken place which materially influenced the situation. For some time past Louis XIV. had been pressing heavily upon his Protestant subjects, who had already begun to seek safety in emigration. In September he revoked the Edict of Nantes, the charter of Huguenot liberties, which for a hundred years past had secured at least a degree of toleration for French Protestants. The revocation let loose a storm of persecution, and Huguenot refugees began crowding to Brandenburg, Holland, and England. The antagonism to popery which had been quieting down was roused anew, in spite of the fact that the Pope and the Hapsburgs, Austrian and Spanish, both denounced the methods of the French king.

James could have selected no worse moment for championing the cause of his co-religionists in his own country. The French king was employing his soldiery for the persecution, and that fact roused anew the general English hostility to a standing army, the more so when Englishmen who turned their eyes northwards saw what the king's troops were doing in the south-west of Scotland. Nevertheless, James met his parliament with a demand for the increase of the standing army, the need of which he thought had been proved by the Monmouth rebellion, and with the announcement that he had nominated as officers men in whom he had personal confidence, but who also happened to be barred from all such appointments by the Test Act. The change in the sentiment of parliament was at once apparent, though it was by a majority of only one that the House of Commons insisted on giving the question of the Roman Catholic officers precedence over that of supply. The victory over the Opposition brought waverers over to their side. In the result a resolution was presented, in which the House engaged to release the officers from the penalties to which they had rendered themselves liable by taking office in defiance of the Test Act, but which in effect invited the king to cancel their appointment. The House of Lords followed suit. The



angry king denounced the conduct of both Houses and prorogued the parliament, which was not again assembled, though it was not actually dissolved till the midsummer of 1687.

## II

## —PRIUS DEMENTAT

Never did monarch quite so deliberately seek his own ruin as James II. The strength of the monarchy in England rested upon the support of the Church, and the loyalty of the gentry in intimate alliance with the Church. The clergy and the squires might, not without reluctance but without violent opposition, have been induced to accept a gradual relaxation of the penalties attaching to Romanism constitutionally conceded by themselves; but James fell back on the old plan of forcing his will on the country by the exercise of the royal prerogative, and of doing so in direct defiance of Anglican sentiment. Moreover, by recklessly reviving a parliamentary opposition in a House of Commons which had met filled with a loyalty which was prepared to run quite considerable risks, James had lost his international independence. At the moment of his accession he could have carried England into the general combination of European Powers, Protestant and Catholic, which was shaping for resistance to the aggressive policy of the French king. After his quarrel with parliament, which he prorogued without obtaining the supplies for which he had asked, James was forced to appeal to Louis for the financial aid which was not forthcoming from elsewhere; practically he had to come to Louis as a suppliant not as a bargainer, and even Charles's ingenuity had found it hard work to reconcile England to his own covert union with his cousin of France.

James then set himself to widen the breach with the Anglican Church and those who, having at the outset been prepared to support him loyally, had swelled the ranks of the Opposition at the end of 1685. Every one who had helped in his defeat was dismissed from office, and a direct attack was made on Compton, the Bishop of London. James created a new Court of Ecclesiastical Commission on the lines of the old Court of High Commission; and on it there were only two bishops, with five laymen, the President being Jeffreys. Compton was immediately suspended for refusing to suppress a preacher who had taken up his parable against popery.

The king's next step was to procure a judicial decision in favour of the dispensing power. Before a select court a test case was collusively brought against the Roman Catholic Colonel Hales for holding his commission without obeying the requirements of the Test Act. Hales pleaded dispensation from the Crown, and the court, with one dissentient, gave judgment in his favour. A batch of Romanist peers was admitted to the Privy Council, a Romanist was made Dean of Christchurch at Oxford, and it was commonly believed that the Archbishopric of York was being held open while the king



tried to obtain leave of the Pope to appoint to it the Jesuit Petre. A "No Popery" riot in London gave James an excuse for concentrating a force of sixteen thousand men on Hounslow Heath. While Sunderland was only waiting to avow himself a Roman Catholic, Rochester, at the beginning of 1687, resigned the Treasurership when he found that dismissal was the only alternative to changing his religion. At the same time Rochester's brother, Clarendon, was recalled from Ireland, where he held the deputyship, which was now placed in the hands of the Romanist Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell.

By this time it was sufficiently manifest that James was aiming at establishing a complete Romanist ascendancy by the use of the royal prerogative. It was also clear that he had completely broken with Anglican Toryism. But the English Roman Catholics provided a foundation far too narrow for the throne to rest upon with safety. James and his Jesuit advisers—for it must be remembered that he, like Louis, had allied himself not with the Pope but with the Jesuits—resolved to seek the alliance of the Protestant dissenters. The issue of this resolve was a Declaration of Indulgence, put forth by the royal authority alone, which granted liberty of public worship to all Nonconformists, Protestant or Romanist, and suspended the application of all religious tests to holders of public offices. Anglicanism was scarcely reassured by the accompanying declaration that the established church was to be maintained and the lay holders of what had once been ecclesiastical property were not to be disturbed.

Toleration then had been granted at a stroke, and for the moment James felt that he had won, since grateful addresses poured in from the Nonconformist bodies. But the surprised delight of the dissenters soon gave place to alarm. It was true that they at once began to find themselves displacing in the corporations the Tories who had for so long held the monopoly, but it very soon became apparent that the higher offices of State were not to be open to all, but were to be made a preserve for Roman Catholics, and that all the more important administrative offices were to be filled after the same fashion. Oxford itself, the headquarters of Anglicanism, was attacked; and Magdalen College was cleared of its Anglican Fellows, whose places were taken by Roman Catholics.

These proceedings had the double effect of goading the Anglicans out of their attitude of non-resistance and passive obedience, and of alarming the Nonconformists. Toleration in itself was good; toleration by royal decree was questionable; toleration as exercised by the Crown might very soon be translated into a Romanist tyranny. The first Nonconformist enthusiasm was rapidly changing to a suspicious antagonism. James made another bid for the support of the dissenters by issuing a second Declaration of Indulgence, followed by an order that the clergy should read it from their pulpits on two appointed Sundays.

By that order passive obedience was strained to the utmost. A meeting of London clergy resolved on the exceedingly moderate course of presenting



a respectful petition to the king praying that the order might be withdrawn, and challenging the legality of the suspension of statutes by royal prerogative. The petition was presented in the name of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sancroft, and six more bishops; the saintly Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Trelawney of Bristol, White of Peterborough, Lloyd of St. Asaph, Lake of Chichester, and Turner of Ely. This was two days before the Declaration was to be read. Next day the petition was printed and circulated. On the Sunday the churches were filled with anxious congregations, but only in four places was the Declaration read; to the joy of dissenters as well as of Anglicans. The king plunged forward along the fatal path which he had chosen. He resolved to prosecute the bishops for publishing a "seditious libel." Three weeks after the presentation of the petition the seven bishops were lodged in the Tower to await trial, their passage thither being accompanied by the sympathising applause of the populace.

Public excitement was already at fever heat; two days later it was roused to a still higher pitch by the announcement that at last a son had been born to James. With that strange infatuation which clung to every act of the king, the strict ceremonial attending the birth of a royal infant was neglected. Nine-tenths of the public believed, as might have been expected in the circum-

stances, that the story was a fiction; that the babe was supposititious, not the offspring of the queen at all. There were several details which gave colour to the rumour. The birth provided an heir-apparent to the throne who would certainly be brought up as a Roman Catholic. The child would exclude Mary of Orange and her husband, unless, as the Princess Anne remarked, it "became an angel in heaven." Hitherto Protestants had reckoned with confidence that, whatever James himself might do, it was at least certain that his successor would be a Protestant. The certainty vanished with the birth of the boy. Excited Romanists, including the king, discovered that a miracle had been wrought; excited Protestants discovered not a miracle but a monstrous fraud.

Again three weeks passed and the day of the trial of the bishops arrived. At first it was hoped that the charge would collapse upon technical points, but the Crown surmounted the technical difficulties. The case was fought out on its merits. Of the four judges, two summed up in favour of the Crown, two in favour of the bishops. The jury at first declared themselves unable to agree. They were shut up for the night to argue it out. In the morning it was announced, to the frenzied joy of the populace, that the seven bishops were acquitted. Ominously enough for the king,



The Seven Bishops.

[From a medal contemporary with the trial.]



even "Kirke's Lambs" on Hounslow Heath shouted their Protestant satisfaction.

James had urged on the prosecution, fanatically credulous that the birth of his son had been a signal mark of Heaven's favour for the course which he was pursuing. On the night after the seven bishops were acquitted, Admiral Herbert, disguised as a common seaman, was carrying to The Hague a letter inviting the intervention of William of Orange; it bore the signatures of the Tories Danby and Lumley, of the Whig Earls of Devonshire and Shrewsbury, of Henry Sidney and Edward Russell, brothers of the two chief victims of the Rye House Plot, and of Compton, the Bishop of London.

### III

#### FULFILMENT

William of Orange was primarily a Dutch patriot whose ruling passion was the desire to curb the aggression of Louis XIV. If he wanted the crown of England, which, until the birth of King James's son, had seemed likely to descend to his own wife in the natural course of events, it was not from motives of personal ambition, but because it would secure England as the ally of Holland against France. As matters stood, while James reigned in England the king, if left to his own devices, was very unlikely to join an anti-French coalition, although English sentiment was notoriously hostile to France. William had no idea of coming forward as the champion of an English party to eject James from his throne and seat himself on it as an obvious usurper. The defence of Holland against Louis was much more to him than the acquisition of an exceedingly unstable throne which would prevent him from throwing all his energies into European politics. But it would be a very different thing if he reinforced English public opinion so as to enable it to compel James to act as it directed. To do so, however, it was imperative for him to be quite certain that his intervention would be acceptable to public opinion, and that the policy he advocated would be endorsed by it. The birth of the prince gave him a fresh incentive. There was no longer any reason to expect that sooner or later his wife would succeed to the throne without any intervention on his part. Already in spring he had gone so far as to promise that he would intervene in arms if a request that he should do so came from sufficiently influential quarters. That request had now come, backed by the urgent advice that he should cancel his first formal recognition of the birth of an heir to the throne, and should assert his wife's title to the succession, repudiating the legitimacy of the lately born infant.

Louis XIV., unfortunately for himself, played into the hands of his adversary. In order that William might take active steps in England it was in the first place necessary for him to have an effective force of Dutch troops at his disposal to take part in the enterprise, since it would by no means



have satisfied him to depend upon insurrectionary levies in face of the king's troops. In the second place William could not move if Holland itself were being immediately threatened by Louis ; in such circumstances Dutch troops, the Dutch navy, and the Dutch Stadtholder could not absent themselves. In the third place it was desirable to avoid giving the enterprise the appearance of an anti-Catholic crusade lest William's Catholic allies on the continent should be offended.

Now Louis, by the great persecution of his own Protestant subjects, had secured the predominance of the anti-French party in Protestant Holland ; suspicions of an alliance between James and Louis fostered there the sentiment which favoured William's plan. The Stadtholder found no great difficulty in procuring means for substantial armament, nominally for the defence of Holland. Again, if Louis had realised what would be the outcome of William's intervention in England, he might have secured himself against future woes by merely keeping the Dutch in fear of invasion. But he grasped at the prospect of an immediate gain instead of warding off the future danger. The office of Archbishop of Cologne, whose holder was one of the seven electoral princes of the Empire, was vacant. Louis's candidate for the electorship was defeated by the Imperial and Papal candidate, through the action of the Pope, and Louis resolved to enforce his claim at the sword's point. French troops entered the Palatinate. Louis, if the phrase may be permitted, killed two of William's birds for him with one stone. He had in effect made an aggressive attack at once on the two heads, ecclesiastical and secular, of Roman Catholic Christendom, the Pope and the Emperor. There was no fear that those powers would now quarrel with William for an enterprise to restrain James from associating himself with Louis. And further, by invading the Palatinate, Louis had committed himself to a campaign which precluded him from making any immediate attack upon Holland, and had thereby set William and the Dutch troops and fleet free for independent action.

No one except Louis and James had any ostensible ground for opposing William's policy. More than twelve months ago, in response to James's attempt to procure his endorsement of the policy of "toleration," he had very expressly made known his own view—that freedom of worship was desirable, but that the religious tests, as conditions of holding public office, ought not to be withdrawn. That satisfied nine-tenths of the people of England, and satisfied also the Catholic Powers.

Meanwhile, for nearly three months after the acquittal of the bishops James continued to blunder along the old line, dismissed the two judges who had been in favour of the bishops, threatened the clergy who had abstained from reading the Declaration of Indulgence, and shut his eyes to William's preparations. Then he took sudden alarm. Troops were hurried over from Ireland and summoned from Scotland. Despairing of vigorous support from the dissenters, the king executed a *volte face*, and made a series of concessions to the Anglicans. Officials who had been dismissed for adhering to the Test Act were reinstated. And yet although he had



announced his intention of summoning a parliament—in which the Commons, for reasons already explained, would have been in effect a packed assembly, and the Lords could have been controlled by the creation of peers and the readmission of Roman Catholics—he feared the risks ; parliament was not summoned. Louis had tried to save him by warning the United Provinces that any movement on their part against James would be treated as an act of hostility to himself. To conciliate the Dutch James made overtures to them, accompanied by declarations that there was no treaty between himself and Louis. The Dutch took the overtures for a trap, and declined to be ensnared ; but Louis was extremely irritated, and at once cancelled the pre-



The Embarkation of William of Orange for England, 1688.

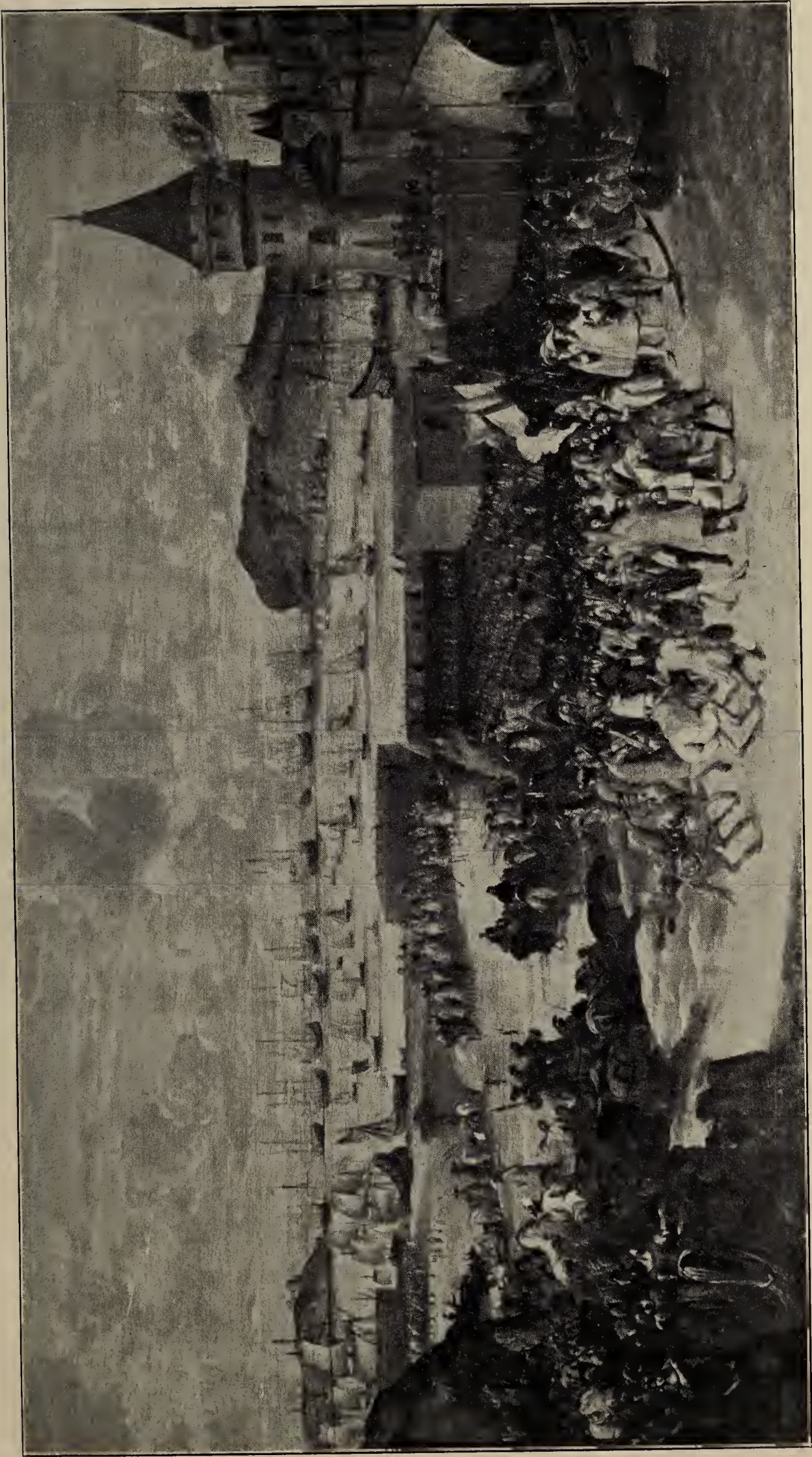
[After a contemporary print.]

parations which he had just resolved upon for direct measures against Holland.

At the end of October all that William needed was a favourable wind ; until then westerly gales had defeated all attempts to set sail. But on November 1st a "Protestant wind" from the east carried William's ships to sea, while it held James's fleet wind-locked in the estuary of the Thames. William passed down channel unmolested and landed at Tor Bay on November 5th.

William's arrival aroused no enthusiasm. He was not naturally endowed with the superficial qualities which make for an easy if insecure popularity, nor did he ever condescend to cultivate them. He had none of the winning graces on which Shaftesbury had relied when he chose Monmouth to be the rival of James. Moreover he was a foreigner, and Englishmen are seldom ready to take a foreigner on trust. Also the nation was not in love with revolutions, and was doubting whether a revolution would be really





THE LANDING OF WILLIAM III AT BRIXHAM, TORBAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1688

From a painting by an unknown artist at Hampton Court Palace, by permission of  
the Lord Chamberlain.







necessary to secure its present aims. The king had conceded so much during the last weeks that there was reasonable hope of extracting the rest of the national demands without proceeding to the last extremities. Had a Tudor been upon the throne of England William would not have been long in the country unless as a prisoner.

But James, as usual, carefully threw away all his chances. The obviously politic course he could hardly have been expected to follow. That course would have been the immediate summoning of a parliament and the dismissal of Romanist officials. James, in plain terms, could have secured his throne if he could have brought himself frankly to accept the principle which William had publicly recommended—of toleration for all forms of worship accompanied by religious tests for public office. His son-in-law would have been left with no justification for remaining in the country, except the demand that James should deny the legitimacy of the infant prince, a demand which it would have been quite impossible to make good.

With this James would not be content; but he still had an alternative. If he had appealed to the nation as the national king, declining to accept the dictation of English affairs by a foreign prince backed by a foreign army, the probabilities were that his appeal would have been successful. That chance he spoilt by his conspicuous mistrust of Englishmen. Even his own English troops were already disgusted by the arrival of the Irish regiments; instead of assuming that all true patriots must be on his side, and would join him in teaching the foreign invader a severe lesson, he made it obvious that he was afraid to fight William. By behaving as if his cause was already lost, he ruined a more than respectable chance of victory. A rapid march to the west would have created a conviction of confidence which would have secured the waverers on his own side; vacillation and the display of his desire to remove the infant prince out of the country to safe quarters in France had the precisely contrary effect. With every day's delay the certainty increased that the malcontents would declare for William, and when once they began to do so openly a steady stream of desertions was assured. And meanwhile William was carefully abstaining from any action which might arouse hostility, and was maintaining the theory that he was in England not to claim the crown, but to secure a free parliament and a constitutional government.

Ten days after William's landing men began to declare themselves, many of the gentry of the west joining William's standard. Danby in Yorkshire and the Earl of Devonshire in the Midlands began to raise troops in those regions. James had given the command of his troops to the incompetent Lord Feversham, who was a Frenchman born. When it was decided that the forces, which were assembled at Salisbury, should fall back to cover London instead of taking the offensive, John Churchill and the Duke of Grafton went over to William; they were followed immediately by George of Denmark, the husband of the Princess Anne, and then by Anne herself.



Before the end of the month James had made up his mind that the game was lost and that flight was the only course left for him, although in the meantime he had agreed to a course which might have saved his throne. The Tories who had remained loyal to him, reinforced by Halifax, extracted from him the promise to summon a parliament in January, dismiss the popish officers, break off alliance with France, issue a general amnesty, and send three of their own number—Halifax, Nottingham, and Godolphin—as commissioners to treat with William. But even when the commissioners were treating he succeeded in despatching his wife and child out of the country; and on the same night he himself took flight, dropping the great seal into the Thames by way of embarrassing any possible administration, after having, with the same object, destroyed the writs for the assembling of parliament.

The king's flight cleared the way, or seemed to do so, for William to establish a provisional government. Some of the most unpopular of James's adherents attempted to follow his example; Judge Jeffreys, amongst others, was caught and hardly saved from the fury of the mob, to die soon afterwards in the Tower. And yet James was given another chance. By sheer accident the fugitive was caught by some fishermen and detained at Sheerness. The Council of Peers, who had temporarily assumed the functions of a government, brought him back to London, where, in the curiously oscillating state of public opinion, his return was received with bonfires, bell-ringing, and general acclamation.

Nevertheless the flight itself had really sealed James's fate. It had seemed for the moment to give William what he could not venture to claim; for it was one thing to eject James by force, and quite another to act on the assumption that his voluntary flight was equivalent to an abdication. It had carried over Halifax and others of James's ablest supporters to William's camp, and it was now William's object to frighten James into a repetition of the performance, and to take care that this time his escape should be unhindered. Some display of coercion was all that was needed to give effect to William's design. On December 22 James fled for the second time, to be hospitably received by the king of France, who established him in the palace of St. Germain.

The disappearance of the king left no legal government in England. There was no parliament, and no existing council which could claim authority. William was the only person who could deal with the emergency, and he did so characteristically. He summoned an assembly consisting of all those who had sat in any of the parliaments of Charles II.; not members of James's parliament, because elections since the suspension of the charters were held not to have been free. To these were added fifty members of the corporation of London. This assembly promptly resolved that a free Convention should be summoned, a parliament in all but name, like the Convention which recalled Charles II. Till this body should be assembled William was requested to exercise the executive functions of government, and to this request he



acceded. The boroughs elected their representatives under the old charters which had been cancelled in the last years of Charles II.

The Convention's first step was to pass two resolutions—that James by his flight had abdicated the throne, which was therefore vacant; and that it was against public policy that it should be occupied by a prince of the popish religion. By the Lords, however, the first resolution was so far changed that it did not assert the throne to be vacant. The Commons, among whom there was a great Whig preponderance, in effect declared that a monarch was to be elected; the Lords implied that some one or other was already *de jure* monarch. The settlement was not a very simple matter. Many Tories clung to the old plan of a regency. Danby and others, supported by some of the Whigs, desired to claim the crown for Mary herself. According to the strict law of hereditary succession, if the infant prince were excluded, Mary stood first, Anne and her children next, and after them William. These three came to the rescue. Mary de-



A medal commemorating the flight of James II.: the breaking of the oak and the flourishing of the orange tree.

clined to accept the crown unless it was shared by her husband. Anne recognised that it would be to the public advantage that William should reign, and that her own succession should be deferred till after his death as well as Mary's. William recognised that this was a personal arrangement, and that in the event of his having children by another wife than Mary, Anne and her offspring should have precedence of those children. It merely remained for William to remark that he did not claim the throne for himself, but that he had no intention of remaining in England in any capacity except that of king. If the crown were offered him he would accept it; if it were not he would return to Holland. Both Houses were now ready to accept the solution which placed William and Mary on the throne as joint sovereigns, the sovereignty being continued to the survivor. If they had children, those children would succeed their parents in due course; if not, Anne and her children would succeed. William being the next heir, his children by any subsequent marriage would stand next in the succession, and after them the Protestant who stood nearest to the throne, whoever that might be.

It was further resolved that, before the throne should be actually filled, securities should be obtained for the national laws, liberties, and religion. But it was clearly impossible to wait for the preparation of a detailed written



constitution ; and the Houses satisfied themselves by drawing up the Declaration of Right. The practices of the last two reigns which were regarded as subversive of the constitution were precisely set forth. Thus once more the exaction of money without a direct parliamentary grant was expressly prohibited ; the suspending and dispensing powers—the right, that is, of suspending the general operation of a statute, as in the case of the Declaration of Indulgence, or of granting dispensations from its operation in particular cases, as in the appointment of Romanist officials—was pronounced contrary to the law ; so was the maintenance of a standing army without consent of parliament ; so was the establishment of arbitrary courts, such as that of Ecclesiastical Commission. Popular rights were further definitely asserted ; the right of presenting petitions to the king, violated by the treatment of the seven bishops ; the right of free election and free debate in parliament ; and the right to the frequent assembly of parliament. The crown was offered to William and Mary conditionally on their acceptance of this latest charter of national liberties. Their acceptance was accompanied by the Act of Settlement fixing the succession on the lines laid down ; and William and Mary were proclaimed king and queen of England and Ireland on February 13, 1689. Thus was the Glorious Revolution of Whig tradition carried to completion ; and since the official New Year was still dated not from the January 1 but from March 25, 1688 remained the titular date year of the new order.



## CHAPTER XX

### THE REVOLUTION

#### I

#### THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT

KING WILLIAM III. had neither sought nor accepted the crown of England as a nominee of a political party. He was king because if James and his son were excluded from the throne Mary and her husband were in effect the only possible occupants. Being king, he was resolved to rule conscientiously and impartially, but the government of the new kingdoms was in his eyes secondary to his aims as the leader of European resistance to French aggression. So long as he could best serve those aims by retaining the English crown, that crown was of use to him, but if he found himself hampered in his foreign policy by the action of English parties, England would be merely an incubus. His strength lay in the fact that England could not afford to let him go.

On the other hand, he was accepted without enthusiasm by any party. Of the Tories many were wedded to the doctrine of passive obedience, and only acquiesced in the new order because of their fears of a Romanist domination, with doubt in their hearts if not on their lips whether their allegiance to James could be discarded on any pretext whatever. Half the Whigs, on the other hand, wanted in effect to have a republic with a royal figurehead, not a monarch with a will of his own. One party, in short, was inclined, if provoked, to challenge his title, and the other to curtail his prerogative, but neither was prepared to go so far as to drive him to resign his crown. And William did not himself wish to resign his crown so long as the possession of it served the purposes of his continental policy.

Now, unlike William himself, the English people were more keenly



William III.



interested in their domestic concerns than in the problem of bridling the ambitions of Louis XIV. They were unfriendly to Louis mainly perhaps on account of his persecution of the Protestants. They were quite willing to see him bridled, and they were very unwilling indeed to support him actively ; but foreign affairs were in their eyes secondary to domestic concerns. William chafed, while the Convention, transformed into a parliament by his establishment on the throne, insisted on giving precedence to the affairs which in its eyes were of primary interest.



Queen Mary II.

One of the first Acts of the parliament incidentally solved a problem which had been left unsettled by the Declaration of Right. A regiment on the point of embarkation for Holland mutinied and declared for King James. A Mutiny Act was consequently passed which, while it provided for the maintenance of the army for six months, afterwards extended to twelve, subjected deserters to punishment by martial law. In effect it followed that at the conclusion of the twelve months the standing army would cease to exist unless the Act were renewed. By making twelve months the period of the Act, the parliament also made it necessary that the Houses should be summoned annually ; that is, that twelve months should not pass without their being assembled. The duration of parlia-

ment was not touched, nor was there any formal Act requiring that parliament should meet ; but its annual assembly was from thenceforth an administrative necessity. Like the Habeas Corpus Act, this measure, of great constitutional importance, was unpremeditated, and became law almost by accident.

The first obviously necessary step was the imposition of an oath of allegiance to the new Government, the penalty for its refusal being disability to hold office. Apart from the clergy there were not many refusals ; even those who held that James was still king *de jure* accepted William's *de facto* sovereignty. Among the clergy, however, there was a less ready acquiescence. Many of them were thoroughly committed to the doctrine of non-resistance, and felt unable to transfer their allegiance. Five of "the seven bishops" demonstrated their loyalty to principle by refusing the oath, and their example was followed by some hundreds of the clergy,



who, as a necessary consequence, resigned their preferments. No further penalty however was exacted, and the "Non-Jurors," as they were called, for the most part continued to find congregations or patrons who approved of their principles and provided them with a livelihood.

The Declaration of Right left unsettled sundry constitutional questions which still required to be dealt with by statute; but before these came up for consideration it was necessary to arrange religious affairs. William himself was a Calvinist, while his wife was an Anglican; sentiment and policy caused both of them to favour toleration. But the events preceding the Revolution had hardened popular feeling against Romanists, while they had clearly given to the Protestant dissenters a very strong claim for consideration. The latter, in spite of strong temptation, had declined the benefits conceded to them by the Declaration of Indulgence, when they found that the price to be paid for them involved absolutist innovations and Romanist ascendancy. Churchmen, in consequence, had gone far towards committing themselves at least to a relaxation of the laws which pressed upon dissenters. The Revolution itself and its stability were in so great a degree due to the attitude of the Nonconformists that the Revolution Government could not have left their position unaltered.

The first method of dealing with the situation proposed was a Comprehension Bill, which was intended to admit within the pale of the Church a large number of the Nonconformists, a measure on the lines which had been anticipated by the Presbyterians on the Restoration of Charles II. But during the years intervening the barrier between Nonconformity and orthodox Churchmanship had hardened. While the theory of comprehension was perhaps generally approved, the practical difficulties were not easy to overcome, and the bill was dropped before reaching the final stage. A substitute was found in a Toleration Act, which virtually conceded freedom of public worship and cancelled the whole effects of the Conventicle and Five Mile Acts. But there was no relaxation of the laws as applied to Papists, or to those whose rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity excluded them from recognition as Christians. But if freedom of public worship was granted, the retention of the Test and Corporation Acts still shut out Nonconformists as well as Papists from the official service of the State or the municipality, military and naval as well as civil, and they continued to be debarred from the education of the universities. Not till the nineteenth century were these disabilities removed, although their effect was minimised partly by technical devices, and partly in course of time by annual Acts of Indemnity for breaches of the law. In effect what the Toleration Act did was to leave the position of Romanists unchanged and to retain the disabling Acts against Protestant dissenters, while relieving them from the penal portions of the Clarendon Code.

William, in accordance with the principle upon which he always desired to act, selected his ministers from both parties, while his real confidence continued to be given to his own compatriots. Danby and Nottingham



came from the Tory side, Shrewsbury was a Whig, Halifax had acted independently of party, and had at one time or another led and opposed both sections. Churchill's services procured him the earldom of Marlborough. Danby, with a painful disregard for the convenience of future generations, was made Marquis of Caermarthen; five years later the confusion was made worse by his elevation to the dukedom of Leeds. Having noted the fact, it may be found simplest to refer to him throughout by the first and most familiar of his titles. This recognition of Tories was displeasing to the Whigs with their substantial majority in the Commons, since they had intended to make the victory their own, to appropriate the spoils, and to punish vindictively all those who had aided and abetted the Crown in excluding them from power. Danby and Halifax were the special objects of their hostility. William, on the other hand, was convinced that he needed the support of the Tories as a body, and was strongly opposed to taking measures which would inevitably alienate them. The Whig proposal to retaliate on the Tories, by disabling every one concerned in the upsetting of the old corporations from holding municipal office, brought about the dissolution of the Convention Parliament and the summoning of a new one in March 1690.

Before the dissolution the Declaration of Right received statutory confirmation as the Bill of Rights. The bill was not precisely identical with the Declaration, since it was more precise and complete in the abolition of the dispensing as distinct from the suspending power. Hitherto it had been generally assumed that the former might legitimately be exercised upon occasion; but the abuse of it which had converted an exceptional privilege into a normal procedure caused it to be done away with altogether. There was also much discussion as to distinguishing the next Protestant heir by name. This was in fact Sophia, the wife of the Elector of Hanover and sister of Prince Rupert. But there were various possibilities that other persons with a prior legitimist title might become entitled to precedence by adopting Protestantism before the succession became an immediate question, and her nomination was rejected. The Protestant succession was secured, however, by the requirement that every future sovereign should make the Declaration laid down in the Test Act, and that marriage with a Papist should be a bar.

When the new parliament met Halifax was driven to resign office by the violence of the attacks upon him. The general result was that the Whigs lost their majority in the Commons, while Danby became the predominant figure in Council. There was not, of course, a formal reconstruction of the ministry on party lines, but practically the Whigs in parliament assumed the character of an Opposition. The king, however, checked the attempt at reprisals for the past by proposing an Act of Grace, from the benefits of which only a few persons were excluded, chief among whom was Sunderland. When the parliament had bestowed upon William and Mary for life the permanent revenue which had been conferred upon Charles



and James, the most pressing parliamentary questions were settled, and William left Mary in England associated with a group of "Lords Justices" in control of the Administration, while he himself went over to Ireland where danger was threatening.

## II

## IRELAND

In England, and, as we shall presently see, in Scotland, the strength of Protestantism ensured the rule of William and Mary against anything like a national insurrection. Nothing of the kind was attempted in the one country; in the other, though Dundee raised the standard of King James, it was with the knowledge that the Jacobite cause could not succeed without reinforcements, and when Dundee himself fell in battle the victory of the government was assured. With Ireland, however, the case was very different. There the great bulk of the population was Roman Catholic. That population had its particular grievances, besides the general grievance of subjection to England; but it had every reason to favour a Stuart régime with its promise of a Catholic ascendancy, in preference to that of a government pledged to Protestant principles and the repression of Romanists.

In Ireland, then, while there was no particular sentiment of loyalty to the House of Stuart, personal interest drew the majority of the population to favour the Jacobite cause. In Ireland, moreover, the rule of Tyrconnell under James II. had in effect transferred political power to the Romanists. In Ireland, as in England, the corporations had been manipulated, but in Ireland there was no Test Act to preserve their Protestantism. And for Ireland the restoration of James would mean a revolution and the upsetting of the Land Settlement, made on the restoration of Charles, which had kept the proprietorship of the soil in the hands of the Protestant minority.

Now, England had not forgotten the Irish insurrection of 1641, nor the fears of an Irish army being employed for the coercion of England when Strafford was Deputy. James looked to Ireland as the base from which he would be able to recover the crown of England. But to William that country appeared to be of minor importance; he had no inclination to withdraw troops from England to serve in Ireland, especially as Tyrconnell, who had the whole Irish administration in his own hands, appeared willing to negotiate. The king sent over Tyrconnell's brother-in-law to arrange terms, but the agent promptly associated himself with the Earl, who, after a very brief delay, threw off the mask. The Protestant settlers outside Ulster were quickly overpowered, and, in Ulster, were swept into Londonderry and Enniskillen. Before the end of March, 1689, James himself had landed at Cork without any attempt having been made to obstruct his passage, and proceeded to Dublin, where he summoned a parliament.



The action of that parliament showed the use which the long depressed majority intended to make of the advantage which they believed themselves to have won. Their declaration in favour of James was a matter of course; so was their announcement of toleration for all religions. Next came a series of acts oversetting the claims of the English parliament and English authorities to override the parliament of Ireland. Landowners were in future to pay the tithe to their own Church; but, as the overturning of the Land Settlement practically displaced all Protestant landowners in favour of Catholics, this meant that the tithe would go to the Roman Catholic clergy, who were no longer to be barred from holding ecclesiastical appointments. But the most subversive measures referred to the land. All forfeitures and settlements since 1641 were cancelled; the land was to be restored in possession to the representatives of those who had possessed



Londonderry about 1680.

[From a contemporary drawing in the British Museum.]

it at that date. The lands of persons now in "rebellion" against James II. were to be appropriated to the Crown, and from them compensation was to be provided for those persons who had bought land since the Settlement and were displaced by the restoration of such land to its former owners. How the land of these rebels could be at the same time appropriated to the Crown and restored to the original owners the legislators did not pause to inquire. Parliament went on to pass an Act of Attainder containing the names of some sixty peers and more than two thousand commoners. Their property was forfeited, but they were to have the opportunity of taking their trial, and recovering it if they proved themselves innocent. The amazing proceedings of this parliament may perhaps account for the extreme vindictiveness displayed when a Protestant parliament recovered the mastery.

During the summer months it appeared quite possible that the Protestants might be wiped out altogether. Enniskillen was hard pressed, and



Londonderry was subjected to a rigorous siege and close investment. Within those towns, however, there was a fine spirit of stubborn resistance. The Derry garrison was resolved to hold out to the last gasp. After long delay English troops, under the command of the notorious Colonel Kirke, reached Lough Foyle, only to declare themselves unable to force the boom which guarded the river. But when the garrison was on the verge of sheer starvation urgent advices from England put an end to Kirke's inaction. The boom was forced, Londonderry was relieved, and when once the blockade was broken the siege was useless. On the same day the garrison of Enniskillen met and routed at Newton Butler a superior force which had been sent against them.

In William's own view the sound course of action was not to divert forces to Ireland, but to employ them in a direct attack on France, since the French were assisting King James with men, money, and stores. But he could not resist the pressure of public opinion, and his principal marshal, Schomberg, once a Huguenot officer in the armies of King Louis, was despatched to Ulster. But his force was attacked by sickness, and he was unable to adopt an offensive strategy. As the spring of 1690 advanced William resolved to bring the Irish War to a conclusion—to throw a large force into the country, and to take command of it himself.

It is not easy to understand why so little had hitherto been done by the fleets either of France or of England. To either, the effective command of the seas should have secured effective mastery in Ireland. Apparently each was afraid to challenge the other. Under the influence of Colbert France had acquired a powerful fleet even in the time of the last Anglo-Dutch War. But while England had only made one abortive attempt to sever the communications between France and Ireland, when Admiral Herbert was defeated at Bantry Bay, France now made no attempt to interfere with the passage of William, his troops and his supplies, to Ireland. When the thing was done the able French Admiral Tourville took the seas and inflicted a disastrous defeat on the combined English and Dutch squadrons off Beachy Head, thereby creating a panic in England. But for the purposes of the Irish War his victory was perfectly futile. The engagement at Beachy Head took place on June 30th; on July 1st William routed James's army at the Boyne Water. James hastily concluded that his cause was lost and fled to Waterford, whence he found his way by sea to France.

Apart from the fact that William had to effect the difficult operation of forcing a ford in the face of the enemy, no great interest would have attached to the battle of the Boyne if it had not moved James to take flight. As it was, Ulster and Leinster were lost to the Jacobites, but their hold on Connaught and Munster was not relaxed. The French were predominant on the sea, and four important Irish harbours were open to them. England for the moment was almost denuded of troops, and probably the invasion of England was more immediately practicable than at any time before or since. But Louis declined to make the attempt, and the next time that the



French and English fleets met the balance was to be turned decisively and permanently in favour of England.

The panic caused by the battle of Beachy Head was somewhat allayed by the news of the Boyne, and by the discovery that the French fleet intended to make no further use of its victory. William's own return to England was delayed by his desire to capture Limerick, into which a valiant band of Irish Jacobites threw themselves when both Tyrconnell and the French General Lauzun had lost heart. But William was eager to leave Ireland and take the command of the armies in Holland, and when his first approach was repulsed by Patrick Sarsfield he withdrew. Marlborough, however, undertook a campaign in the south, which at once deprived the Jacobites of the valuable harbours of Cork and Kinsale. In June and July of the following year Ginckel, to whom William had now entrusted the Irish command, defeated the French commander St. Ruth at



A medal of 1690 commemorative of the Battle of the Boyne.

Athlone and Aghrim, and only Limerick remained to offer a desperate resistance. When Ginckel brought up the siege guns which had hitherto been wanting, Sarsfield saw that the defence could not be maintained. He succeeded in obtaining terms which were the well-deserved reward of a heroic defence. The garrisons were given free leave to depart and enroll themselves in the Irish regiments, which were to render splendid service to France in her wars for many a year to come. But beyond this, pledges were given that the Irish Roman Catholics were to have the same religious freedom as in the reign of Charles II. Practically the terms of the capitulation of Limerick itself were to be applied to all the remaining Jacobite garrisons, who had the choice of free withdrawal or of remaining as the liege subjects of King William in the enjoyment of a complete amnesty. The capitulation was in effect a general treaty to which the alternative would have been a prolonged guerilla war which it was of the utmost importance to William that he should avoid.

The disastrous breach of faith which followed the capitulation and the self-chosen exile of Ireland's most enterprising sons was the most



shameful episode in the history of the relations between Ireland and England. The English parliament at Westminster passed a law for Ireland which was, broadly speaking, an application of the Test Act to all office-holders and members of parliament in Ireland. The result was the assembly of an exclusively Protestant parliament in Dublin, and that parliament made haste to tear up the Treaty of Limerick. The proceedings of James's Irish parliament were annulled, and a series of penal laws against the Catholics were enacted. Papists were forbidden to teach in schools, to carry arms, or to send their children abroad to be educated. The Romanist clergy were exiled. The estates of Roman Catholics descended not to the oldest son but to all the sons; if one of them elected to turn Protestant the whole estate passed to him; and if a Protestant heiress married a Papist she forfeited her title. In a country where four-fifths of the population were Romanists every Romanist was cut off from participation in public affairs, from military service, from educating his children, from acquiring land, or from handing down a consolidated estate to later generations. The utter helplessness to which the Catholics were reduced is shown by the paralysis which fell upon them. Jacobitism never again lifted its head in Ireland, not because the Irish would not have been Jacobites if they could, but because they could not if they would.

### III

#### SCOTLAND

The reign of James II. or James VII. had opened in Scotland that period of cruel persecution known as the "Killing Time." To this era belong the most famous of the martyrdoms, the shooting of the carrier John Brown before the eyes of his wife, and the drowning of Margaret Wilson and Margaret M'Lauchlan in the Solway, with the latter of which, it may be remarked, Claverhouse was in no way concerned. But the persecuting policy was no more possible for James in Scotland than in England; it inevitably gave place in the Northern as well as in the Southern country to the policy of theoretical toleration. In Scotland, as in England, it was not possible to aim at the advancement of Roman Catholics, or even at their general relief, without conceding a like freedom to the Nonconformist Protestants. In proportion as the law bore more hardly on a larger portion of the population, the Scottish Presbyterians were more ready than their English brethren to accept the Indulgence decreed by the king in both countries in 1687.

It must further be observed that there was not in Scotland the same constitutional ground as in England for rejecting as dangerous gifts bestowed by the arbitrary power of the Crown, because the constitutional powers of the Crown were not limited either by custom or by statute as they were in



England. Yet the fact that the king's real purpose was the advancement of Papists was sufficiently manifest, and caused uneasiness and resentment on all sides. Opposition, however, was much more difficult to organise effectively, while the forces of the Crown were not merely, as in England, a coercive power which the Crown held in reserve, but a normally active instrument for the repression of opposition.

Thus the position in Scotland presented itself to James as perfectly secure, and he had no qualms in summoning Claverhouse, who had now become Viscount Dundee, to lead the bulk of the Scottish troops over the border in the autumn of 1688. But by so doing his government lost the control of Scotland. A stream of malcontents hurried to the South with the obvious intention of adapting their own further action to the course of events in England. The flight of James to France paralysed his supporters, and immediately after the formal acceptance of the crown of England by William and Mary, a Convention Parliament assembled in Scotland.

In that Convention it became at once apparent that the majority were opposed to the return of King James. That disposition was enormously strengthened by a letter from James in which, with his usual blundering impolicy, he adopted a high-handed and threatening tone instead of recognising the necessity for conciliation. Dundee and the Jacobites withdrew from the Convention, which proceeded to appoint a committee on the analogy of the Lords of the Articles, consisting of eight of the nobility, eight burghesses, and eight of the barons or gentry of the shires. This committee directed and formulated the further proceedings of the Convention.

The Convention in England, while it transferred the Crown from James to William, did not in theory effect a revolution of the constitution. Ostensibly it reaffirmed and safeguarded constitutional doctrines which had been set at nought by absolutist innovations. It was not so with the Scottish Convention, which went a long way towards asserting for Scotland these same English constitutional claims which in Scotland had never subsisted either in theory or in practice; and in some respects it went beyond the English formulary. It drew up a Claim of Right corresponding to the English Declaration of Right; but instead of claiming that James had abdicated the throne by his flight it affirmed that James had forfeited the Crown, and, further, it asserted that prelacy, being opposed to the will of the people, ought to be suppressed. Its determination to claim a constitution approximating to the English model was expressed by the denunciation of the system of appointing the Lords of the Articles by any other process than the free election of the members by the Estates, whereas the Stuart system required first the nomination by the peers of eight bishops who were inevitably king's men, the nomination by the eight bishops of eight peers who, in the circumstances, would also obviously be king's men, and the selection of the rest of the Lords of the Articles by this united group of king's men. Thus the Stuart system had in effect given entire control of legislation to the king and the Privy Council; the new system



would practically give it to the Estates. On these terms the crown was offered to and accepted by William, and the Convention was converted into a parliament.

Dundee escaped from the South and raised the Jacobite standard in the Highlands, while William appointed to the command in Scotland General M'Kay, an efficient though not brilliant officer who had served under him in Holland. Five and forty years earlier Montrose had shown what could be done and had learnt what could not be done by an army composed of the clansmen. Among the mountains especially such an army could move with extraordinary speed which regular troops could not hope to match. In the shock of onset the charge of the



The Parliament House, Edinburgh, in the 17th century.

[From an engraving by Gordon of Rothiemay about 1650.]

Highlanders was apt to be irresistible. But the commander of the mixed force was certain to find himself hampered if not paralysed by clan feuds and rivalries which even at the most critical moments it was almost impossible to repress, especially as the clans formed separate contingents, each led by its own chief. But, further, the Highlander conceived of war not as campaigning but as raiding ; after a fight or two he was disposed to consider himself at liberty to return to his glens with his booty. With such forces much damage might be inflicted on an enemy, but with such forces alone an organised campaign of conquest was not practicable. Dundee's hope was that he would be able to keep the Lowlands in a state of perpetual alarm and to demoralise the government troops until he should receive reinforcements from France or from Ireland which would enable him to conduct an effective campaign.



The failure of this hope when the summer was already far advanced made it imperative that Dundee should effect some striking achievement in order to keep his forces from dissolving. Accordingly he enticed M'Kay into the Highlands, drew his force into an ambush at the Pass of Killiecrankie, and put it completely and overwhelmingly to rout. Nevertheless his brilliant victory proved a fatal disaster to the Jacobite cause. Dundee himself fell while leading a triumphant charge. There was no man to take his place. The victorious clansmen attacked Dunkeld; but being there repulsed by the resolute resistance of a regiment of Cameronians, they lost heart and interest and dispersed to their own homes. The civil war was practically at an end.

The war being disposed of, there remained three problems for the government—the settlement of the Highlands, the settlement of the powers of parliament, and the settlement of the ecclesiastical question. All of them were thorny. The parliament demanded that the Committee of the Articles should be entirely elected by the Estates. The Crown, through its ministers and its own representative or commissioner, the Duke of Hamilton, claimed that the ministers should themselves form one of the groups in the committee; and neither party would give way. On the Church question the parliament wanted to restore the independent government of the Church on the Presbyterian system. The Crown, on the other hand, was determined to uphold the supremacy of the State over the Church, and also, not without reason, feared that Presbyterian supremacy would be intolerant and retaliatory. All that was accomplished in 1689 was the passing of an Act abolishing Episcopacy. During the winter, however, some of the leaders of the opposition to the Crown discredited themselves by entering upon intrigues with the Jacobites, and, on the other hand, William resolved to make substantial concessions. Accordingly in the following year the old Committees of the Articles were finally abolished. Future committees were to be appointed by the Estates, but their appointment was not to be a condition precedent on legislation; and while ministers of the Crown had the right of attending such committees, they had no right as ministers to vote. Another Act established the Presbyterian system of Church government with the Kirk Sessions as its base and the General Assembly as the apex. William's concessions secured his position as against Jacobitism, but practically the Scottish parliament and the Scottish Church had won their demands at the expense of what had hitherto been the royal prerogative.

For the settlement of the Highlands the policy adopted combined conciliation with compulsion. The advocates of military control were allowed to establish a government fort and garrison at Fort William; but although for some time many of the Highland chiefs refused to take the oath of allegiance, the disappearance of all chance of help either from Ireland or from France disposed them to come to terms. Some accepted a solatium, and when in August 1691 amnesty was promised to all who should take the oath of allegiance by the first of January ensuing, all of them took



advantage of the promise, although many deferred doing so till the last moment.

Nevertheless in one case the submission came too late. Sir John Dalrymple, the Master of Stair (that is the heir-apparent of the Earl of Stair), one of William's principal advisers with regard to Scottish affairs, found an opportunity for destroying the small clan of the Macdonalds of Glencoe. The chief had presented himself, on the last day allowed by the law for taking the oath, at Fort William, where there was no authority empowered to receive it. Hence he did not actually take the oath before a duly constituted authority till a week too late. The Edinburgh authorities refused to accept the oath thus tendered, and Macdonald's name was returned to London as a recalcitrant. Of these circumstances William and possibly Dalrymple were unaware; and Dalrymple procured from the king an order that "this set of thieves" should be "extirpated." To carry out the order a party of soldiers was sent to Glencoe, whose commander was connected by marriage with the chief's family. Their hostile intentions were carefully concealed; they were received and entertained hospitably by the clan for a fortnight. Then in the night they rose upon their entertainers and massacred them, though some few of the intended victims succeeded in making their escape.

The act deservedly aroused furious resentment; the punishment of the perpetrators was demanded on all hands; and the inadequacy of the penalties inflicted after the whole story of the crime was revealed left a rankling sentiment of bitterness in Scotland against the system which kept the king of Scotland at a distance from the realm and out of touch with the Scottish people. William's ignorance of the facts connected with the tendering of the oath, an ignorance which may or may not have been shared by the Master of Stair, might have been held to excuse him if his subsequent conduct had not endorsed the whole of the proceedings. Stair had to resign his office, but William did not withdraw from him his personal favour. The memory of the massacre of Glencoe remained among the Scottish people as one of the incentives to Jacobitism and to the popular dislike at least of any closer connection with England.

#### IV

#### WILLIAM'S WAR

During the four summer months of 1690 when William was in Ireland, signalised by the defeat of Beachy Head and the victory of the Boyne, the queen was left to conduct the administration in England. The period was critical, but Mary passed through the ordeal successfully. The king, on his return, was eager to hasten to Holland to concert plans for the future with his continental allies, for which it was of the utmost importance



that he should be able to rely on the support of England. Parliament, meeting for an autumn session, voted large supplies with a readiness which augured well for the future, and William was able to leave for Holland in January, undeterred by the discovery of a Jacobite plot, the investigation of which was left to his wife. It was not an assassination plot, but aimed at the restoration of James on conditions which would probably have proved acceptable neither to James himself nor to the French king. Lord Preston, an ex-minister of James who gave his name to the conspiracy, was condemned to death, but was ultimately pardoned. Only one of the plotters was actually executed, and some were never brought to trial. For this leniency William himself was responsible, as he reappeared in England for three weeks.

The campaigning in the Netherlands with which he was largely occupied during the ensuing period was of a dreary and unprofitable description, neither the French nor the allies gaining any material advantages. But the fact of primary importance to England, so far as the war was concerned, was that France was wholly absorbed in the military operations, and was thereby prevented from adopting the energetic naval policy which might have been anticipated after Beachy Head. England, on the other hand, concentrated her efforts mainly on naval reorganisation. Nevertheless Louis and James devised a scheme of invading England in 1692.

So many of the leading men in England, including Admiral Russell who was now at the head of the English Navy, were in correspondence with the Jacobites, that James suffered from an illusory conviction that the majority of Englishmen were in favour of his restoration. He issued a proclamation granting a general pardon, from which certain prominent persons were specially excluded, which only made it the more imperative that the men whose names were not excluded should emphatically demonstrate their loyalty to William. This document was so obviously useful to the government that instead of endeavouring to suppress it they published it broadcast. Nothing could have served better to bring the whole nation into line, and, above all, the fleet was put on its mettle.

A large army of invasion was collected in Normandy, and Tourville, the victor of Beachy Head, took the seas to clear the Channel, with positive orders to fight the English fleet on the first opportunity. In obedience to those orders he fought the battle of La Hogue. His fleet was scattered after hard fighting, and a dozen men-of-war which ran themselves aground under the guns of La Hogue itself were cut out by boats under the command of Sir George Rooke, and were burnt down to the water under the eyes of James himself, who was an impotent witness of the catastrophe. This great victory virtually annihilated the French sea-power, which two years before had threatened the ascendancy of England. From that hour England remained decisively the mistress of the seas; for her only rivals were the Dutch, and with them she was in constant alliance until the



smaller country had fallen gradually but completely behind her in the maritime race.

The triumph of La Hogue was somewhat obscured by the failure to follow it up with effective blows and also by the defeat of William at Steinkirk. William was one of those commanders who rarely won a victory in the field, yet possessed a marvellous skill in preventing the enemy from turning a defeat to account. The French General Luxemburg gained little by Steinkirk, but English public opinion was irritated because the English troops which had borne the brunt of the fight were badly cut up, and for this some of William's Dutch officers were held to blame.

So when William returned to England for the winter he found a parliament ill content and murmuring of grievances. Nevertheless the necessity for continuing the war was paramount; the attacks on the government were defeated, and William obtained the required supplies. The two exceedingly important measures by which this end was achieved will be discussed in the ensuing chapter. Here it will suffice to explain that the first was a new assessment of the Land-tax, which became the principal source of revenue, and the second was the creation of the National Debt, a system of borrowing for national purposes, and (in the first instance) spreading the repayment over a term of years in the form of annuities to the lenders.

Again, in 1693, the war went unsatisfactorily. William was again defeated at Neerwinden or Landen, though again the French victory was barely won and was of little immediate service. England, however, suffered a serious blow. A great merchant fleet, English and Dutch, known as the Smyrna Fleet, assembled to sail for Smyrna and the Levant. In spite of the great naval preponderance won at La Hogue, an insufficient escort was provided. Off the Spanish coast the Smyrna fleet was assailed by the French Navy, which had concentrated in the Mediterranean. The odds were so overwhelming that the escort had no choice but to take refuge in flight, and the entire merchant fleet of four hundred vessels was either captured or wrecked.

This disaster had a somewhat curious consequence. Hitherto William had held fast to his principle of employing ministers from both parties, being extremely anxious not to identify himself either with Whigs or with Tories, although in many respects the Whig interests were more closely allied with his own. He had been particularly anxious not to part with Nottingham, a Tory in whose honesty he had great confidence. Antagonism between Nottingham and Russell had made it impossible to retain both in the ministry, and Russell had been removed from the Admiralty. The failure of the Admiralty produced an insistent demand for Russell's reinstatement, which necessitated the retirement of Nottingham; and William at last made up his mind to form a Whig ministry and thus to initiate the system of party government. This device is attributed to the counsels of Sunderland, who, although he had been excluded from the Act



of Grace, had been allowed to return to England and had been received to some extent into William's favour, although not admitted to office. The division of parliament into two great parties was, as we saw, a product of the latter years of Charles II., but it caused no immediate change in the old system by which the king chose his ministers as he thought fit, without reference to the Legislature. To no one was it obvious that if the administration and the parliament were to be in agreement the ministers themselves must be in harmony with the majority in the House of Commons, and must therefore be members of the party which held the majority in that Chamber. For it was still the theory that policy was directed by the king and that the ministers were the men chosen by him to carry out not their ideas but his. They were counsellors no doubt by whose advice his ideas might be modified, but it was their business to do what the king wished them to do. If they disagreed they were none the less supposed not to resign but to obey; if they failed they were dismissed. There was no collective responsibility; each man was directly responsible to the king for his own doings. It was only in the reign of Charles II. that it had been claimed that the minister was responsible not only to the king but to parliament. The fact that a Whig majority in one parliament gave way to a Tory majority in the next was no reason, on these principles, why the king should change his ministers, though he might find it necessary to modify his policy in order to avoid a deadlock.

Now at this early stage the rule of selecting ministers from one party presented itself merely as a matter of practical convenience, the outcome of the division of parliament on party lines which itself was hardly twenty years old. In course of time it came to mean that the policy of the Crown must be the policy advocated by ministers as a body, and that must be a policy supported by the party as a whole from which the ministerial body was selected; ministers became the medium for imposing upon the Crown the policy approved by the majority in parliament. But at the outset ministers appeared to be the medium through which the majority in parliament was to be induced to support the policy of the Crown. So much was this felt to be the case that for a long time to come there was a strong sentiment in favour of excluding office-holders under the Crown from the House of Commons in order that the Crown might not exercise undue influence on that body. To this now antiquated sentiment is due the rule that a member of parliament being appointed to office under the Crown must seek re-election.

The plain fact was that at the end of 1693, William, though he very much disliked the idea of placing himself in the hands of the chiefs of one party, still saw the necessity for having on his Council a body of men who would work in harmony together, and of having the solid support of one great party in the face of the great war on the continent. Later, when the war was over, he sought to revert to the principle of taking ministers from both sides. But now he had to choose one party or the other, and the





The Fleet Prison in the 17th century.  
[From a print of 1691.]



balance was definitely in favour of the Whigs. Both Whigs and Tories, as he knew, were intriguing with the Court of St. Germain; but while many of the Tories were Jacobites at heart, the Whigs intrigued mainly as an insurance against accidents; they did not want to see James back, but they wanted to secure a *locus standi* in case he should chance to come back. The Whigs were more definitely in favour of the war; and this was what William had most of all at heart. The Admiral in whom the country had most confidence was a Whig. If Marlborough, who was reckoned as a Tory, had been trusted by the king, he might have counterbalanced Russell; but William knew too well that the brilliant soldier was not to be trusted. The result was that in the ministry of 1693 the only Tories retained in office were Danby and Godolphin. The changes had a beneficial effect on the temper of the House of Commons, which granted adequate supplies, and the financial reforms of the reign were crowned by the creation of the Bank of England.

The campaigning in the Netherlands in this year was uneventful. With the combatants so equally matched as they were, it was becoming more and more obvious that the victory in the long run would fall to the side whose treasury held out longest; and the strain was already becoming too severe for Louis. A joint naval and military expedition against Brest met with disaster, attributed almost with certainty to the treachery of Marlborough, though information of the design had reached the French from other sources as well. The military command was given to Talmash, the only English soldier with a reputation which at that time rivalled Marlborough's; and jealousy of Talmash is generally supposed to have been the motive of Marlborough's treachery. Talmash was killed before Brest, but Russell was despatched with a fleet to the Mediterranean where the French fleet took shelter at Toulon. In spite of his own protests, the English admiral was ordered to winter in the Mediterranean, with the result that naval action on the part of the French was completely paralysed, and the control of the inland sea became a permanent feature of English naval policy.

Altogether, when William met parliament at the end of the year, the progress of the war was more satisfactory than at any of the earlier stages except immediately after La Hogue. King and parliament found themselves harmoniously disposed, and William was at last persuaded to accede to the favourite demand of the Whigs, a Triennial Act, which required not only that parliament should meet at least once in three years, but that the life of a parliament should not extend beyond three years. The Whigs gained too by the retirement of Danby, now Duke of Leeds, consequent upon charges of corruption in connection with the East India Company. The charges could not be actually proved, but, on the other hand, Danby was not able to clear himself; too much suspicion attached to him to allow of his continuing to take an active part in politics.

Before Danby's fall William had suffered a very serious blow both politically and personally by the death of Mary. Tories who had been able



to reconcile themselves to the joint rule of King James's eldest daughter and her husband found it less easy to reconcile their consciences to the solitary rule of William. She, moreover, had been personally popular. William might inspire admiration and respect, but he had no hold on the affections of the English people. Moreover, he had always been able to trust the control of affairs to the queen during his own absence on the continent; there was now no one in whom he could repose a like confidence.

Again, however, it was fortunate that the campaigns of the following summer told heavily in William's favour. The value of the English control of the Mediterranean was manifested, since practically the whole of the French fleet was shut up at Toulon; and William himself, as well as the English troops with him, won a new prestige by the recapture of the important town of Namur, which the French had taken in the first year of the war.

As a natural consequence the dissolution of parliament and a general election brought a considerable accession of strength to William and the Whigs. But though the king's hands were strengthened for the purposes of the war, the Whigs themselves became more insistent upon party demands which were not to the king's liking. William was obliged to cancel large grants which he had made to his most intimate friend and adviser, the Dutchman Bentinck, now Duke of Portland, who, like all William's Dutch companions and servants, was the object of English jealousy. Somewhat reluctantly also he had to accept a Treasons Bill, which required not only that there should be two witnesses to some kind of treason, but two witnesses to any specific charge; while in other respects it secured to the accused rights which we should now regard as elementary, but which had hitherto been denied; so that there could be no repetition of the old scandals in connection with the Rye House Plot.

A reaction in William's favour, however, was caused by the discovery of Barclay's plot for the assassination of the king, which had been tacked on to a plot for a French invasion. William was never vindictive, and indeed carefully avoided too close enquiry and too much knowledge of the persons concerned in plots against his person; on this occasion he displayed his usual half-contemptuous leniency, but parliament and the public were stirred to an unwonted loyalty. As in the reign of Elizabeth plots had recoiled upon the head of Mary Stuart, so now plots recoiled upon the head of James II.; and again, as in Elizabeth's reign, a National Association was formed for the defence of the king. The war however suffered, for the panic created by the alarm of invasion led to the recall of the Mediterranean fleet and the recovery of French ascendancy in those waters. Savoy withdrew from the coalition, and France was relieved from any further fighting in Italy.

Two other consequences of the plot are to be noted in England. One of the prisoners, Sir John Fenwick, revealed intrigues with the Jacobites, already known to and ignored by William, on the part of Shrewsbury,



Marlborough, and Godolphin. Marlborough had already been removed from public employment, although his intriguing ceased with the death of Mary, which ensured the succession of Anne, whom he could count upon controlling through his wife. Shrewsbury and Godolphin both resigned, Godolphin being the only member of the Tory party who had continued till this time to retain high office. A purely Whig ministry was thus brought to completion. The second consequence was that the Whigs themselves resorted to an Act of Attainder to prevent the escape of Fenwick himself, since one of the two witnesses required by the law which they themselves had passed to bring about his condemnation had been bribed to leave the country. Although the Whigs were as loyal as ever in providing supplies for the war, it dragged on ineffectively through 1696. Both sides in fact were exhausted and anxious for peace. Negotiations through the winter and the following spring bore fruit in the Treaty of Ryswick. For William the chief gain was his definite recognition as King of England by Louis XIV., who pledged himself to give no active support to the Jacobite cause, though he refused to deny his hospitality to the exiles. The treaty altogether was a demonstration that France could do no more than hold her own against a coalition which included England; whereas, before the Revolution, when she could practically count upon the neutrality if not the support of England, every treaty had brought her a fresh accession of territory and strength.

But the war had served as a binding force in English politics, and disintegration followed upon the peace.

## V

## THE GRAND ALLIANCE

William himself had no illusions on the subject of the peace. He regarded it as nothing more than a truce, certain to be followed before long by a renewal of the struggle with Louis. In spite of the treaty, therefore, he urged upon the parliament the necessity not only for a large naval expenditure, but also for the maintenance of a standing army of not less than thirty thousand men.

There was no difficulty about the fleet; the nation was thoroughly alive to the importance of maintaining naval supremacy. But Tories and Whigs alike regarded the standing army as being at the best a necessary evil in time of war, intolerable in time of peace. William, being his own Foreign Minister and relying for the conduct of foreign business on Portland and his Dutch associates rather than upon English statesmen, had failed to educate Englishmen up to his own views of continental affairs; and the Whigs regarded the peace as a satisfactory opportunity for cutting down the army to a standard far below that which was needed to satisfy William.



They were, moreover, irritated by the fact that the king had at last openly admitted Sunderland to his counsels, and obviously gave more confidence to him than to the Whig leaders themselves. Even the retirement of Sunderland only induced them so far to modify the proposals for disbandment as to allow the retention of a force of ten thousand men apart from the troops in Scotland and Ireland.

But the Triennial Act now demanded a dissolution, while William's own continental plans called for his presence at The Hague. The king's constant absences from the country were inevitably unpopular, and his departure at this time had an unfavourable effect on the elections. The result was that ministers found themselves faced by what was practically a Tory majority in the House of Commons. To William's intense disgust parliament resolved to reduce the army to seven thousand men, all of them English-born troops, which at once involved the withdrawal of the Dutch troops on whom William himself relied, and the exclusion of his favourite officers from military posts. So sore was the king that he was on the verge of resigning the crown of England. But he could not afford to sever the ties between England and Holland, though the only modification he could obtain was the admission to the army of naturalised English subjects as well as those who were English born.

The Tories pushed their victory further by demanding and obtaining an enquiry into the distribution of the forfeited lands in Ireland. The Whig ministers no longer found themselves leading the House, and William began to replace some of them by Tories. The Irish Lands Bill is notable as the first instance of a device of the Commons for evading opposition on the part of the Lords, which came to be known as "tacking." The bill was made part of the bill granting the Land Tax. This being treated as a money bill, the Lords could not amend, though they might reject it; and they could not afford to reject it, because to do so in effect meant the refusal of supplies.

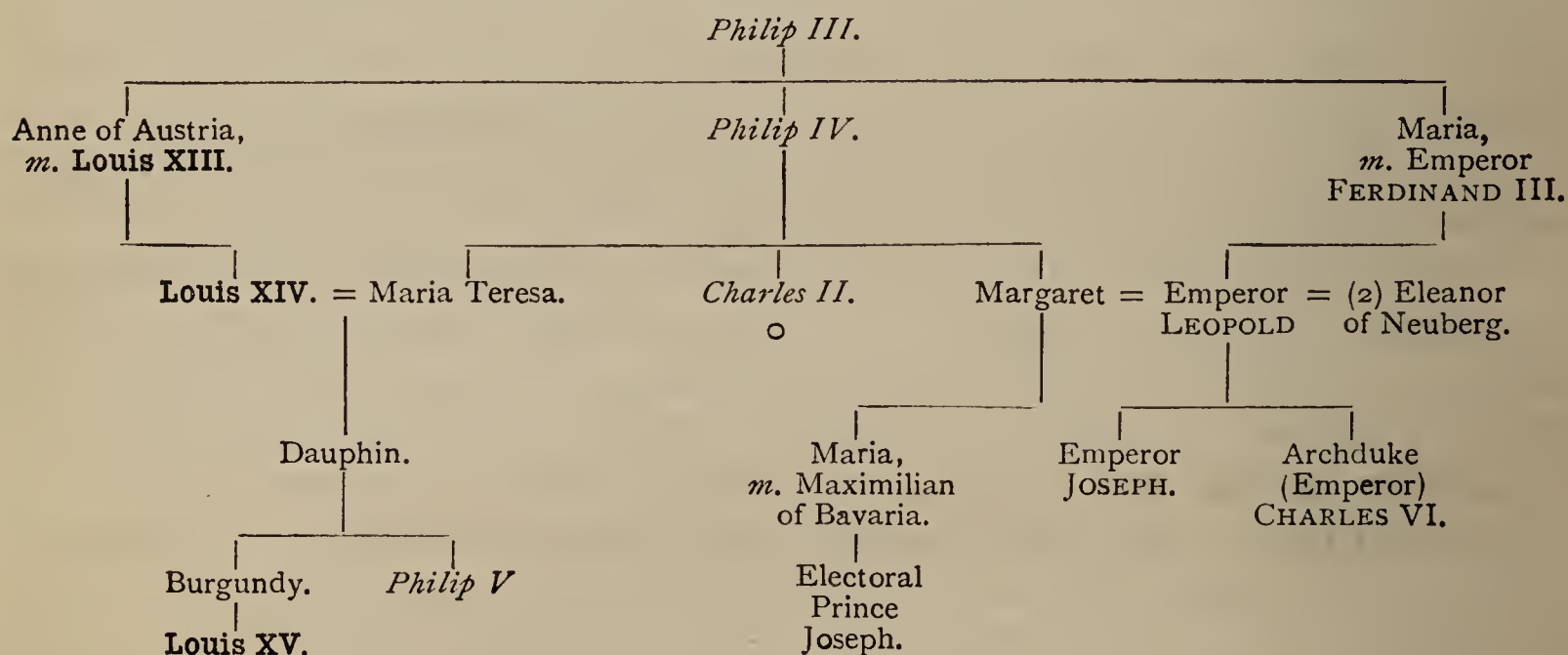
The attitude of the parliament remained continuously adverse. In the winter of 1699-1700 there were direct attacks upon Whig ministers; and the general principles of toleration, to which William and the Whigs were committed, were assaulted by new measures directed against Roman Catholics, to which reference has been made in an earlier section. In effect the penal code against Catholics was applied in its main features in England as well as in Ireland. Its iniquity was only less apparent, because in England the papists were only a small minority, whereas in Ireland they formed four-fifths of the population. The enquiry into the Irish lands gave the Tories another handle against the king, since the distribution of the forfeited estates had been made in clear violation of the king's promises and in the interest of personal favourites. Again the method of tacking was employed to force through the House of Lords a bill for the resumption of the lands granted since the king's accession. The Lords attempted amendments, but the Commons took their stand on a resolution of the



Commons in 1678, which declared that the Lords had no power to amend a money bill. The Lords were now obliged to give way. A still more vigorous attack upon the Lord Chancellor Somers and the king's foreign advisers was stopped only by the prorogation of parliament. At the end of the year instead of being reassembled it was dissolved ; for a crisis had arrived in foreign affairs which made William prefer the chances of a new parliament to another meeting with the assembly which had proved so hostile.

England in general cared little and knew less about the European problem which absorbed the king of England. In a vague fashion the people were antagonistic to France ; also in a vague fashion they suspected their Dutch monarch of caring more for Dutch than for English interests, whereby there was bred in them a sort of reaction against the anti-French

### THE SPANISH SUCCESSION



sentiment, which had become active during the peace following the Treaty of Ryswick. Until that treaty William had consistently pursued the single policy of antagonism to France, but since that date he had rather taken the line of seeking an accommodation with Louis. The European problem was in truth one with which England had less direct concern than any other Power ; but it was on the point of plunging the world into a tremendous struggle, in which, as it happened, England played a very leading part. England as a matter of fact ultimately flung herself into the war with zeal, not because the country was passionately moved by any abstract political theories or any obvious interests at stake, but because Louis deliberately stirred it to a frenzy of wrath against himself. Nevertheless it is necessary to seek to understand the complication of dynastic and other interests which brought the war upon Europe at large.

The central question, then, was that of the inheritance of the Spanish dominion. The senior branch of the house of Hapsburg ruled over that dominion, while the junior branch was identified with Austria and the



headship of the German Empire. Spain and the Empire had ceased to be united under one crown when Charles V. abdicated in 1556. Now, for the past century, the Spanish crown had descended in direct male line, but outside that actual line the claim to succession passed through the daughters of the kings of Spain. For generations the Austrian Hapsburgs had taken the eldest of the Spanish infantas as their brides. As there was no "Salic law" in Spain, this course would obviously secure the Spanish succession to an Austrian Hapsburg whenever a king of Spain should fail to leave a male heir of his body. But twice the rule had been broken. Both Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. had in their day married the eldest infanta, while the second infanta had been the bride of the Hapsburg. But in both cases, again, the Bourbon marriage, but not the Hapsburg marriage, had been accompanied by a renunciation of the Spanish succession on the bride's part. Hence Leopold of Austria, emperor at the end of the seventeenth century, son of one infanta and husband of another, seemed entitled to claim the Spanish succession whether for himself or for the offspring of his marriage if the king of Spain, Charles II., should die without issue.

But the complication did not end here. Louis, on the one hand, was able to put in a strong plea that his own wife's renunciation (though not his mother's) was legally invalid. Again, the offspring of Leopold's marriage had been a daughter, who married the Elector of Bavaria. But Leopold wanted the Spanish succession to pass to his own second son by a later marriage, and therefore his daughter renounced her own claim on condition that the Netherlands should be handed over to her husband and their offspring. This, again, was a renunciation which had no legal validity at all; but it will be seen that there were thus three possible claimants to the succession, since there was no possibility whatever that the king of Spain, Charles II., would leave an heir of his body. These were Leopold's grandson, the Electoral Prince of Bavaria—a child born in 1792; Leopold himself or the son whom he had nominated in his own place, the Archduke Charles; and a grandson of Louis XIV. Nor could the question be settled among them by merely legal arguments, technicalities as to the more or less questionable validity of particular renunciations. The Spanish dominion included not only Spain itself and the American Empire, but also the Netherlands, the kingdom of Naples, and certain Italian duchies. Europe could not allow this great dominion to become a mere appendage either of France or of Austria, although Spain itself would certainly be fiercely opposed to any disruption of the Spanish Empire.

It appeared then that here was a matter for settlement by treaty. The European balance would be best served by the accession of the Electoral Prince of Bavaria to the Spanish dominion, and this had the advantage also that his title seemed on the whole the strongest. But the other claimants would not withdraw without receiving a substantial solatium. On this basis, William and Louis on their own account made the first Partition



Treaty. Austria and France were to get their solatium in Italy, and otherwise the Spanish Empire was to go to the Electoral Prince. The English ministers were not consulted, nor was the matter brought before parliament. Ministers simply gave an unqualified assent to William's bargain.

But then the bargain itself was nullified by the death of the Electoral Prince. William did not want to see the Spanish Empire handed over to Leopold of Austria, but still less did he wish to see it handed over to Louis XIV. Louis, however, was again ready to make his bargain with the maritime Powers, since he did not wish to fight for his maximum claims against a European coalition. He was moderate enough, and was prepared practically to content himself with the Italian territories, leaving the rest to the Archduke Charles. On these terms William and Louis came to an agreement known as the Second Partition Treaty; but when it was submitted to Leopold he refused to accede to it.

This was the situation at the beginning of 1700; but it was once more turned upside down by the action of Spain. The Spaniards were furious at any scheme of partition. The dying King Charles made his choice between the Hapsburg and the Bourbon in favour of the Bourbon. He named as legitimate heir to the whole of his dominion Philip, the second son of the French Dauphin, since it was recognised in Spain as well as elsewhere that the actual crowns of Spain and France were not to be united. If Philip's elder brother should die without heirs then the crown of Spain was to be transferred to his younger brother, and only if he succeeded to the French throne should it pass to the Archduke Charles, the Hapsburg claimant. Having made his will in these terms Charles died.

Now William took for granted that this will would merely be used to force Leopold into acceptance of the Partition Treaty. To his intense indignation Louis immediately tore up the treaty and took his stand upon the will, claiming the entire Spanish inheritance for his grandson. In William's eyes this meant that for all practical purposes the policy of the Spanish Empire would be directed by Louis; and that was a consummation which must be averted at all costs. He could have carried the Whigs with him, but now the Tories were dominant; therefore he dissolved parliament. But he apparently gained nothing by the dissolution, for in the new parliament the Tories retained their preponderance. It was absolutely necessary to conciliate the Tories, and to educate them over to his point of view. Godolphin returned to the ministry, which was also joined by Rochester.

The first business of the new parliament was to secure the course of the succession. Anne would of course follow William on the throne, but the last of her numerous children had just died, and the succession after her had been left indefinite. Parliament proceeded to pass the Act of Settlement, which nominated as Anne's heir the Electress Sophia of Hanover and her offspring. But the new Act of Succession or Act of Settlement included also a series of clauses dealing with constitutional matters which



had been left over by the Bill of Rights. The king's dangerous control of the courts and judges was finally abolished by the enactment which made judges irremovable except on an address from both Houses. In view of the prospect that the throne of England would be occupied by German princes, it was enacted that the sovereign must be not only a Protestant but a member of the Church of England; that he must not leave the country without consent of parliament; that England was not to be involved in war for the defence of foreign territories; and, finally, that only English-born subjects could be admitted to parliament, to public offices, civil or military, or to the Privy Council. The king's acceptance of the Act of Settlement had an extremely mollifying influence, which was shown by the resolutions of the Commons promising their support in his foreign policy.

But in the meanwhile Louis had been helping William to convert the country by the openly aggressive character of his proceedings; and the popular conversion was hastened by the captious conduct of the Tories in parliament, who seemed more intent upon impeaching the Whig leaders than on considering national interests. From the county of Kent there came a petition which was practically a censure of the Tory majority and an expression of confidence in the king. The indignant House treated this as a breach of privilege, and sent the gentlemen who had presented the petition into custody; but this, to the country, appeared only to be an interference with the right of petitioning, and a series of addresses after the Kentish model poured in.

With his hands thus strengthened, and with Marlborough, who had at last been restored to his confidence, as his principal lieutenant both for diplomatic and for military purposes, William's negotiations for a new Grand Alliance progressed not unfavourably. But once again it was Louis who deliberately gave William the one thing that he most wanted. In September James II. died at St. Germain. By his deathbed Louis pledged himself to recognise young James Edward Stuart as king of England. James II. was no sooner dead than Louis XIV. publicly acknowledged King James III. Through that act the current of public opinion, already setting steadily in William's favour, became a rushing tide. William seized his moment and again dissolved the parliament.

It was true that when the new assembly met there was a single-figure majority of nominal Tories in the Commons, but half the Tories themselves were already converts as far as the war was concerned. The new House not only pronounced it treason to hold commerce with the prince who now called himself James III., while outside the Jacobite circles he was known as the "Pretender" (a term properly applicable to any person claiming a title held *de facto* by somebody else); it also voted forty thousand men for the Army and the same number for the Navy. A clause was inserted in the terms of the Grand Alliance by which the allies undertook to make no treaty with France until she gave England satisfaction on this head.



William's patience had won. A great coalition had been formed against Louis, in which England had at last become not merely an auxiliary but a principal. But it was left to another to carry on his work. William's health had always been feeble, and had constantly threatened to break down under the tremendous strain of toil and responsibility. The shock of a fall from his horse and a broken collar-bone proved too much for his wrecked constitution. On March 9, 1702, Anne, the last of the Stuart sovereigns, became Queen of England.



## CHAPTER XXI

### THE CENTURY

#### I

#### COLONIAL EXPANSION

WHEN James VI. of Scotland became also James I. of England his actual dominion did not include a single acre of soil outside the British Isles. Ninety-nine years later, when William III. died, the whole of the North American seaboard between the French Acadia on the North and the Spanish Florida on the South was occupied by British colonists. Still farther north, beyond the French Canada, England claimed possession of the Hudson Bay territory or Prince Rupert's Land. Also she was in possession of sundry islands, and the East India Company had established a footing on the Indian Peninsula. Her colonial system was in full play, and her Indian Empire was in the germ.

The conception of an Imperial England overseas had been born in the brains of Humphrey Gilbert and Walter Raleigh while the Virgin Queen still sat on the throne of England and the world still counted Spain, which had annexed the Portuguese Empire, mistress of the seas. But Raleigh's attempts to found the colony which he called Virginia had failed woefully. The Elizabethans were still too eager in the pursuit of short cuts to wealth. Those who were venturesome preferred preying upon Spanish galleons to settling down to a toilsome battle with nature in new lands which produced no gold nor silver nor precious stones. But, as in ancient days, the Dane, baulked of his robbing propensities, sought to satisfy his greed of gain by commerce, the Englishman, when he could no longer spoil the Spaniard, bethought himself of turning the New World to commercial account.

In 1606 a commercial company was formed, which procured a charter for the colonisation of Virginia; for, after a vague fashion, England had asserted a claim to the territories which lay north of the Spanish possessions. The company was granted what were practically sovereign rights over a vast and undefined region (subject to the English crown). The company's settlement at Jamestown formed the nucleus of the colony of Virginia. Here there was no native empire to be subdued, such as the Spaniards had found in Mexico and Peru, or such as that which dominated India. The native tribes were elevated only a degree above barbarism;



they knew no cities, were still half nomadic, and had no political organisation higher than that of the tribe. But such an experiment as this of the English had no precedent in the world's history. The Greeks had planted city states on the Mediterranean shores among peoples for the most part akin to themselves or already possessing an elaborate civilisation. The Romans had not colonised but had planted garrisons. The Spaniard treated his conquests in America as estates of the Crown occupied by garri-

sons who exploited the mineral wealth of the land for the benefit of the Crown. But the Englishman went out to make for himself a new home in a new land, to acquire competence or wealth by the methods with which he was familiar in the old home; and he carried with him his traditional ideas of liberty and self-government.

The first settlers narrowly escaped the fate of Raleigh's colonists. But for the vigour and abilities of one of their leaders, Captain John Smith, they would have been wiped out in their collisions with the native Red Indians, so named because it was still believed that the New World was a portion of the Indies. Experience was needed to teach the practical principle that the colony would best serve the



John Smith at 37.

[From his "General History of Virginia," 1624.]

commercial objects of its founders if the colonists were left in the main to manage their own affairs with the minimum of interference from home. In 1623 the colonists were granted a constitution which vested the government in the hands of a nominated Governor and Council and an elected Assembly of "burgesses." The business of the colony was not merely to be self-supporting, but to develop the products of the country suitable for export, notably tobacco, in exchange mainly for manufactured goods. A large proportion of the settlers were younger sons of the English gentry, of the landowning class, Church of England men, of the type which was presently to recruit the ranks of the Cavaliers. The climatic conditions and the character of the work to be done favoured the employment of slave labour and the importation of negro slaves began in 1620, to be



supplemented afterwards by criminals or quasi-criminals, who were transported to the plantations as slaves for a term of years.

The enterprise of the Virginia Company was followed by one of an altogether different type, when a group of Nonconformists sailed in the *Mayflower* from Plymouth in 1620 and founded the first of the New England Colonies. The motive of the Pilgrim Fathers was to find new soil where they might follow religion after their own fashion, and they were followed by others like-minded with themselves, although these Northern Colonies were divided, like the Puritans at home, between those which were rigidly Presbyterian and those which favoured Independency and toleration. Here the conditions approximated more nearly to those of the English agricultural districts and towns. They drew to them Puritan gentry, burghers, and yeomen. There was no demand for slave labour, nor did the soil grow products for export as in the South; while, on the other hand, the settlers were very much less dependent on manufactured goods from the Old World.

Romanists as well as Puritans were allowed to seek free exercise of their religion in the New World; and the primarily Romanist colony of Maryland was also of necessity tolerationist. This group, however, was much more nearly akin to the landowning classes of the South in origin than to the Puritans of the North, and planted itself in the neighbourhood of Virginia as the second plantation colony, not in the neighbourhood of the New England group. As a natural consequence the New Englanders were entirely in sympathy with the Roundheads when the Civil War broke out, while Cavalier sentiment prevailed in the plantation colonies which gave some trouble to the Commonwealth government. Meanwhile the English flag had already been set up in the Bermudas and the Bahamas, and in Cromwell's time the almost accidental seizure of Jamaica established England beside Spain in the West Indies.

The habitual procedure on the creation of colonies was for a company or an individual to procure from the Crown a charter conveying the possession of certain territories upon conditions. Privileges were conceded, but rights were reserved to the Crown. There was no theory that the colony was a free state; it was a community to which permission was given to settle itself and to go its own way, provided that its specific interests were always recognised as subordinate to those of the mother country. The powers of self-government varied according to circumstances; that is, the powers of the elected Assembly, as compared with those of the Governor and Council, differed, mainly according to the nature of the body to whom the original charter was granted.

On the North beyond the St. Lawrence the French made their province of Canada. The regions between the St. Lawrence and New England were appropriated under James I., and named Nova Scotia in order to provide colonising ground for the Scots. But the ground was inadequately occupied, and was claimed and colonised by the French under the name of



Acadia. More than once, during the Anglo-French wars, the theoretical sovereignty changed hands ; but it was not till 1713 that the country was finally ceded to Great Britain. We have already observed that the Dutch at one time thrust in a wedge between the northern and the southern colonies of the English, and the continuity of the British seaboard from North to South was only completed with the cession of the Dutch colony at the Treaty of Breda.

Pennsylvania was a colony created in the reign of Charles II. at the instance of the Quaker William Penn. This, too, was intended to provide a home for the persecuted members of the Society of Friends, though under conditions which required a general toleration. The Carolinas were an earlier product of the Restoration ; both Clarendon and Ashley were in the small group of the original "Proprietors."

As a general rule the English government itself intervened very little in the affairs of the colonies. Under the Commonwealth Navigation Act no difference was made between them and England itself. English, Scottish, Irish, and Colonial shipping were all on precisely the same footing. The Commonwealth was Imperialist in refusing to differentiate between different portions of the Empire, just as it sought for unification by uniting the parliaments of England, Scotland, and Ireland at Westminster. But with the Restoration the Particularists prevailed. The united parliament was dissolved, and the English parliament became exceedingly English ; that is, it sought the interests of England, however detrimental they might be to other portions of the Empire. The effects were felt by the colonies ; for the Navigation Act at the Restoration imposed restrictions upon colonial commerce for the benefit of English merchants. Colonial ships, it is true, counted as English ships ; they could participate in the carrying trade. But no goods could be imported to the colonies except from an English port, nor might colonial goods be exported except in the first instance to an English port. This did not of course interfere with the trade between England herself and her colonies ; but it required colonial commerce with all other countries, including Scotland and Ireland, to take England *en route*. Protectionist principles were presently carried still further, and the colonists were forbidden to export or even to manufacture goods which could compete in the market with English products.

## II

### THE TRADING COMPANIES

The reign of Elizabeth saw the close of the long period of agricultural depression brought about largely by the conversion of tillage into pasture. That process ceased when the stage had been reached at which the profits of growing wool and of growing corn had become equalised. Something



was contributed to this end by the introduction of convertible husbandry, which increased the profits of tillage. Otherwise, however, there were no great improvements in the methods of farming ; enterprise on the part of the greater landholders was checked by the civil broils. But two features of the period had a specially favourable effect on the rural population. The Elizabethan Poor Law to a very great extent served the purpose with which it had been enacted, of providing relief for honest destitution and at the same time discouraging wilful idleness and vagabondage. But besides this the substitution of the system of industrial regulation under the Statute of Apprentices for the old gild system made itself felt. It provided those whose substantive employment was agricultural labour with supplementary means of livelihood, because it allowed spinning to become a general cottage industry, while in many cases the farmer added weaving to his other employments. The Civil War was inevitably destructive, but its effects were hardly so injurious in England as those of the partisan struggles in France, and were in no way comparable to the disastrous results produced in Germany by the Thirty Years' War. The general prosperity, in short, compared favourably with that of other nations ; and a further impulse was given to industrial development when the persecuting policy of Louis XIV. drove the highly skilled industrial population out of France and to a very great extent into England. The employments in which the expelled Huguenots excelled were not such as in the main brought them into direct competition with the English trades ; a colony of silk-weavers was established at Spitalfields without arousing native hostility. Coming immediately before the Revolution, at a moment when Englishmen were particularly ready to sympathise with persecuted Protestants, and when ideas of toleration were gaining ground, the French king's victims were sympathetically welcomed, and new industries were planted which soon became thoroughly acclimatised.

The great development of the period, however, was commercial rather than industrial, and the main agencies by means of which the commercial extension was effected were the chartered companies of merchants which began to multiply in the later years of Queen Elizabeth.

The general principle applied to these companies was one which had long been familiar in the cases of the Merchants of the Staple and the Merchant Adventurers. A charter was given to an association of merchants conveying to them exclusive rights of trading in particular fields, with jurisdiction over their own members and large powers of independent action. During the sixteenth century the members of such companies traded on their own account as individuals, but were bound to obey the company's regulations. In the seventeenth century there came a new development which was in effect initiated by the East India Company, which had first received its charter on December 31st, 1600. At a quite early stage of its career this association converted itself into a joint-stock



company ; that is to say, the members ceased to trade as individuals ; the company traded as a unit, distributing the profits of the trade among its members. The actual trading was done by the agents or servants of the company. Thus in what were called the *Regulated* Companies the associates were actually individual traders, trading under the guarantees of the whole body and bound by its regulations. In the *Joint-Stock* Companies the associates became simply shareholders, participating in the profits of the trade carried on by the company as a whole, while they themselves only controlled that trade in so far as they could control the election of the Board of Directors.

Practically the whole of the trading with remote, barbarous, or semi-barbarous countries was appropriated to the companies, regulated or joint-stock ; for, as we have seen, the permanent communities or colonies overseas were also planted in the first instance by chartered companies. The principle was obvious. In remote regions the Home Government could not undertake police business ; the trader must be left to protect himself not only against avowed pirates but against foreign rivals. He could not efficiently protect himself if his own countrymen were behaving in a lawless fashion. He could not make terms for himself and his countrymen with native potentates if others of his countrymen were not legally bound by those terms. Hence it was necessary to give to the company exclusive rights of trading and an indisputable authority over traders.

In the importance ultimately achieved by their operations none of the great associations can be compared with the East India Company. For a century after the company received its first charter the great Mogul Empire in India was at the height of its splendour and power. The Moguls ruled unchallenged over all Northern India, though they had not brought the great kingdoms of the South into actual subjection. No one dreamed of a conquest of India like the Spanish conquests of Mexico and Peru. But, broadly speaking, the effect of the maritime rivalry now developing between Dutch and English—for the old Portuguese supremacy in the Eastern waters had already perished—was to make the Spice Islands on the South-East the Dutch sphere, while the English devoted themselves rather to the Indian Peninsula itself. The first footing was gained in 1612 when the British company was permitted to set up a trading establishment (called a “factory”) at Surat on the western coast. A second factory was conceded on the south-east coast at Madras, where the English quarter was known as Fort St. George. This was in 1639. The third, at Hugli on the Ganges delta, was granted in 1650 ; and this was afterwards shifted to Calcutta. The marriage of Charles II. to Catherine of Braganza brought, as a portion of the dower, the Portuguese possession of Bombay, which was transferred by the Crown to the East India Company, and took the position formerly occupied by Surat. The three factories at Bombay, Madras, and Hugli were the centres from which the three British Presidencies ultimately expanded ; but the company were merely tenants, not owners, except in the one case of Bombay.



During the last third of the seventeenth century the French entered the field as rivals of the English and Dutch. This was the era in which, under the influence of Colbert, France developed her greatest maritime energy, and the French East India Company was started in 1664. Hence in the ensuing century the French, not the Dutch, were the rivals who attempted to monopolise the Indian trade and dreamed of a European ascendancy in India; it was the French whose defeat gave to the British the ascendancy which was gradually to expand into Empire.



The old East India House.

[Drawn from an old print by Herbert Railton.]

But even in the seventeenth century there were Englishmen in India who were conscious of the instability of the Mogul Empire; and a French observer expressed his own belief that a Turenne with twelve thousand men could conquer India. As a matter of fact that was very nearly what had been done by Babar, the founder of the Mogul Empire, when Henry VIII. was reigning in England. English governors, prematurely contemptuous of an empire which was as yet only on the verge of utter disintegration, ventured to levy war in support of their demand for the redress of grievances. The English factories would have been wiped off the face of India if the Emperor Aurangzib had not feared that English ships would cut off his faithful Mohammedan subjects from the pilgrimages to Mecca by which



he and they set great store. This, not fear of English arms, induced the Mogul to deal magnanimously with the English, and to reinstate them at Calcutta after the Hugli factory had been destroyed.

But the East India Company had other vicissitudes to pass through besides Dutch and French rivalry and quarrels with the native powers. Their monopoly was a grievance. Enterprising English merchants objected altogether to the principle of the joint-stock company; they wanted to trade for themselves, and to secure for themselves the profits of their own enterprise and energy. They wanted Free Trade for the individual, and they struggled hard to break down the company's monopoly. The Commonwealth government inclined to favour the view of the "interlopers," as they were called, and to treat their independent trading as legitimate. Cromwell, however, resisted the temptation to allow a rival company to set itself up. The view prevailed not that monopoly was in itself a thing desirable, but that under existing conditions it was a necessity. Only a monopolist company would be able to exercise the sovereign functions which were required in dealing with native powers and foreign rivals.

The theory found justification in the reign of William III., when a rival company was actually established under Whig auspices, the old company being associated with the Tories. This was in 1698. The Exchequer was in need of money. The company offered nearly three-quarters of a million to have its charter confirmed by parliament. The interlopers were ready to provide two millions if the subscribers were given the exclusive trade for thirteen years. The second offer was accepted, while the old company was allowed three years' grace to wind up its affairs. Before the three years were up a Tory parliament confirmed the old company's charter. The battle between the companies was so obviously and immediately disastrous to both that in a very short time they were negotiating for a union; and in the last days of 1701 they were incorporated as a single company whose monopoly remained unchallenged for a century.

The accepted commercial doctrine of the day was what is called the Mercantile Theory. It was the business of the State to direct commerce and industry into the channels which were regarded as best for the national welfare; the theory of free competition was unheard of. The East India Company itself had much ado to preserve its existence, apart from the difficulties already referred to, because there was a very general belief that the East India trade was bad for the country, although highly profitable to the traders. The argument was that India did not buy English goods, while England bought Indian goods. Therefore what took place was an exchange of English gold for Indian goods, whereby England was drained of bullion. It was the universally accepted theory that a trade which took money out of the country was bad for the country. It was left for a later age to demonstrate that in the whole field of trade the balance adjusted itself automatically. The advocates for the company won its case with the public by the argument that although gold went out of the country to



India a large proportion of the goods for which it was exchanged were re-exported and exchanged again for gold at greatly enhanced prices, so that the net outcome of the Indian trade was an actual addition to the amount of gold in the country.

On another side Protectionism and Retaliation both followed in practice upon the mercantile theory. It was good to foster each English industry, good to damage the industry of any neighbour who might become hostile, and good to damage any specific foreign industry which might compete with an English one. The influence of the mercantile community in parliament caused those principles to be applied not only to the countries of Europe but to Scotland, Ireland, and the colonies. Scotland could be dealt with only by tariffs, but Ireland and the colonies were subject to direct legislation from Westminster. The colonies probably did not suffer very greatly, for the simple reason that, if there had been no legislation at all, there would still only have been a very small market for such of their goods as came in competition with those of England. It was not so with Ireland, where the growing of wool was deliberately suppressed. Virtually the only industry permitted in that country, apart from agriculture, was the linen manufacture (vigorously encouraged by Strafford), which never became acclimatised in England; and this was not the least of the reasons which kept Ireland in a miserable state of economic depression.

Scotland, on the other hand, though it had gained economically by the commercial and political union under the Commonwealth, had not yet come to regard such commercial advantages as an equivalent for the loss of political independence. With the Restoration she reverted to the position of a foreign state. Her competing goods were shut out from the English market, and she was excluded from the benefits which English shippers derived from the Navigation Act. Although she was too poor to challenge the great English monopolies successfully on her own account, she attempted to do so, most conspicuously in the disastrous Darien Scheme. The Darien Company was formed to establish on the Isthmus of Darien a trading centre which was to rival the East India Company. The scheme failed to find financial support outside of Scotland itself, where it was taken up with unreasoning passion. The inevitable failure was attributed to the machinations of the English mercantile community and the political pressure brought to bear upon foreign communities by William acting under their influence. The collapse of the Darien Scheme and the widespread ruin it involved were turned to account, like the Massacre of Glencoe, to intensify anti-English sentiment, though there were level-headed Scots who saw in it rather a strong argument for a Legislative Union with England which should make the two countries commercially equal.



## III

## NATIONAL FINANCE

The system of national finance occupies a prominent position in the history of the seventeenth century, since for some three-fourths of the period it is a primary factor in the relations between the Crown and the parliament. It is at the very root of the constitutional struggle; not because the people were afraid of being tyrannically taxed beyond endurance, not because they grudged money for public purposes, but because they recognised that the control of the purse ultimately entails the control of policy. But since this constitutional struggle is itself the leading feature of the period to a much greater extent than at any other time in our history, national finance in its connection with that struggle has already been dealt with and requires little further elucidation. In effect the outcome of the long fight was that the Restoration separated the personal income of the king from the public revenue of the kingdom which had hitherto been identified with it. The regular revenue was appropriated to particular objects, while for all other objects additional revenue had to be voted by parliament; and in the course of the reign of Charles II. the principle was finally laid down of appropriating the expenditure to the specific object for which the supplies had been granted.

Except in one particular the sources of supply remained the same as in the past. The parliamentary votes were concerned mainly with the "subsidies," to which each locality was called upon to contribute in proportions fixed by an exceedingly antiquated assessment. Variations in the duties at the ports were controlled not by the desire to increase revenue from that source, but to encourage or discourage particular trades. The one new source of revenue was the invention of the Long Parliament, or, more accurately, was borrowed by them from the Dutch. This was the excise, a tax primarily imposed upon the home production of alcoholic liquors. Unpopular as this novel tax was, it was too productive to be given up, although there was no further extension of its principles.

But revenue had hitherto been provided on what may be called ready-money principles, on the hypothesis that the year's expenditure was to be met out of the year's revenue. Kings in the past had occasionally run heavily into debt, sometimes with disastrous results for the lenders, as in the case of Edward III. and Henry VIII., who met their difficulties by repudiating their obligations. But in general the Treasury borrowed only to meet the immediate expenditure which could not await the collection of the revenue; when the revenue was collected the debts thus incurred were paid. In the days of the early Plantagenets the principal lenders had been the Jews; when the Jews were expelled from England the kings borrowed



chiefly from the Lombards, at a later stage from the Germans, and then, with the great development of English wealth, from the London merchants and especially the goldsmiths. But the risks which still attended this method were demonstrated by the Stop of the Exchequer in 1672, when the Government suspended repayment to the goldsmiths.

The Crown in the past had supplemented its revenues, much to the disgust of the general public, by the sale of monopolies. Private monopolies were abolished before the Civil War, but the monopolies of the great companies were increasingly valuable sources of revenue. Thus we have seen the Government in 1698 obtaining a couple of millions as the price for bestowing a monopoly on the new East India Company. Here, we may remark in passing, lies a striking difference between the English enterprises of this kind and those of France. The English company bought its privileges from the government by substantial subsidies; the French company was a creation of the government, not of private enterprise, and was run by the government generally at a loss.



A first-rate man of war of 1680.

[From a print.]

But, in fact, England had entered upon a period of foreign wars, whose expenses the normal sources of revenue were not capable of meeting. The vigorous and impressive foreign policy of the Commonwealth had almost reduced it to bankruptcy. After the Restoration, the Dutch war, coupled with the gross misuse of the public funds, had so emptied the Treasury in 1667 that half the English fleet had to be laid up, and the Dutch sailed up the Medway. The determination to embark on another Dutch war brought about the Stop of the Exchequer in 1672. And when the Revolution sucked England into the vortex of the European complications, it became increasingly impossible to meet the heavy demands for military and naval purposes out of an annual revenue derived from the established sources.

The first remedy that presented itself was a revision of the old assessment of the land and property tax, which had become translated into the subsidy of £70,000. As matters stood the relative taxable capacity of the different areas had changed enormously since the old assessment. Poor areas had become wealthy and wealthy areas had become poor. A formerly rich area which had become poor still paid its old proportion, and therefore reached the limit of endurance much sooner than a stationary area, while a



poor district which had become rich was still only lightly burdened. The limit of taxing was set by the paying capacity of the most heavily burdened of these three groups. A redistribution of the burden under a new assessment would obviously enable a much larger revenue to be collected without hardship. So in 1692 a new assessment was made, under which it was estimated that a tax of one shilling in the pound would produce approximately half a million. As a matter of fact the burden fell almost entirely upon the land, owing to the extreme difficulty of arriving at any tolerable



The old Mercer's Hall, where the Bank of England was first established.

assessment of the value of other kinds of property. From this time forward the land tax became the main source of revenue.

But even when the land tax was as high as four shillings in the pound, when it produced a couple of millions, war expenditure outran the annual revenue. The land tax of four shillings in 1692 provided a million less than was required. The solution of the problem was found by Charles Montague, afterwards Lord Halifax, in the creation of the National Debt. A loan of a million was invited, but the lenders, instead of being paid off at an early date, were to receive life annuities. Thus the annuity would be an annual charge on the Exchequer, steadily diminishing as the annuitants died off. Two years later the principle of borrowing was further extended by the creation of the Bank of England. The Government called for a



loan of a million and a quarter. Interest was guaranteed on the amount, and was secured on an increase in the Customs. From the subscriber's point of view the subscription was simply an investment. He was certain of his interest, and if he wanted to recover his principal, he would have no difficulty in finding some one else willing to take his place. The subscribers were incorporated as the Bank of England, a company whose business was not commercial but exclusively financial. It is to be observed that the creation of the National Debt provided a powerful guarantee against the development of Jacobitism. The commercial classes, from whom most of the money was borrowed, inevitably felt that a Jacobite restoration might mean a repudiation of the National Debt. That fear kept the solid mass of vested interests on the side of the Protestant succession, and tended to keep it on the side of the Whigs, because the Whigs were more decisively bound to the Protestant succession than were the Tories, although the bulk of the Tories were by no means Jacobites.

The real ease with which the country was able to bear an enormous financial strain without suffering was further demonstrated by the reform of the currency in 1696. The coinage had been deliberately and shamelessly debased in the twenty years preceding the reign of Elizabeth. Its restoration had been one of that queen's first measures; and since that time the standard of the coins issued from the Mint had been maintained. But the coin in circulation had been clipped and defaced till most of it was very much below the face value. According to the recognised law, it was the debased coins that remained in regular circulation. The effect on foreign exchange was disastrous, and trade was hampered. Yet with the war actually in progress the Government faced the problem of calling in the defective coin and replacing it with a currency of full value and not liable of clipping. The whole cost was borne by the State. In spite of the great quantity of coin called in and the long time required for replacing it with the new coins, trade was not seriously disturbed. The moment was seized by the numerous enemies of the Bank of England to make an attempt to ruin that body. The goldsmiths bought up the Bank paper and presented it for payment in specie when the Bank cellars were drained. The Bank, however, treated the demand as a conspiracy, which it actually was, and refused payment, though it met all *bona fide* claims as fast as the Mint could provide it with money. The conspiracy defeated itself, and the Bank emerged from the crisis stronger than before.

#### IV

#### THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

The splendid virility of the Elizabethan era had displayed itself in an astonishing individual versatility typified in Walter Raleigh, who was equally fit to play the part of soldier, sailor, courtier, statesman, and man



of letters. It was an age in which one man could conceive and depict Falstaff and Lear, Nick Bottom and Hamlet, Rosalind and Cleopatra. Not so were the elements mixed in the age which followed. The abounding delight in the exuberance of life and the appreciation of life's seriousness, Paganism and Puritanism, parted company. Paganism captured the court and Puritanism dominated the country. Puritanism as a force in literature gave to the world of its best in Milton and Bunyan. Paganism achieved nothing higher than the dainty lyrics of Herrick and the brilliant depravity

of the Restoration comedy. Even in the seventeenth century it is true that the world could not be divided into Puritans and Pagans ; but at no other period had the two principles been so openly at war ; and because they were so openly at war Puritanism assumed an extravagance of austerity, and Paganism an extravagance of wantonness, incompatible with consummate artistic achievement. Only the supreme genius of Milton and Bunyan made them exceptions. Paganism produced no Aristophanes to set against them.

It must be remembered, however, that the border-



A bedroom party of 1631.

land between the Elizabethan and the early Stuart literature lies not at the beginning but at the end of the reign of James I. ; that half of the "Elizabethan" drama was produced after the Union of the Crowns. And even when the generation of Elizabethans had died out, the hostility between Puritanism and Paganism was not by any means fully developed. The immediate severance was rather that between the intellectual and the emotional, which must unite in the production of the greatest literary work, especially poetry. The pursuit of verbal ingenuities and intellectual subtleties, which had in fact been heralded by the Euphuists, dominated the cultivated taste of the time and produced what a later age chose to call the "metaphysical" poets, at whose head was John Donne. The deeper feelings of men were concentrating upon religion and the passion for liberty, but they had not yet hardened into fanaticism. *Comus* is the consummate expression of the Puritanism which was at once spiritual and intellectual, neither Roundhead nor Cavalier but characteristic of much that was best



among the adherents of both sides when the Civil War broke out. It was the Civil War itself which taught Milton to identify the Royalists with the Philistines, and to allegorise the struggle of Puritanism in the *Samson Agonistes*; while the essential unconquerable spirit at the heart of English Puritanism, independent of all the turmoil of war and faction, still found its sublime expression in the *Paradise Lost*.

In Milton alone the most intense Puritanism was wedded to the highest intellectuality. Consciously his appeal was to a "fit audience though few." John Bunyan represents the Puritanism which took captive the humble and unlearned through its own essential humility and simplicity. A man of the people, low born, with no social advantages, uneducated save for an intimate knowledge of the Scriptures and a considerable acquaintance with the controversial literature of Puritanism, John Bunyan followed the old advice of Sir Philip Sidney, "looked in his heart and wrote." The immortal allegory of the *Pilgrim's Progress* displays the root quality of Puritanism, not turned arrogant by battling with the Devil, nor harsh by battling with the flesh, nor sour by the world's contempt and persecution. Incidentally it gives a delightfully vivid impression of eternal human types under the conditions of the England of the Restoration. But in the history of literature it stands out peculiarly as the precursor of the English novel which was about to be created by Daniel Defoe.



John Milton.

The reign of King Charles I., the Civil War, and the rule of the Commonwealth were not favourable to literary production, except of a controversial character either political or religious. Pamphleteering flourished, but the lighter forms of writing could only be practised by those who were able to stand aloof altogether from the arena. Yet such peaceful spirits were to be found. There is nothing militant in the devotional prose of Jeremy Taylor or the devotional verse of George Herbert, the latter of whom lived to witness only the danger-signals of the storm, not the storm itself. There are few writers dearer to the true book-lover than Sir Thomas Browne, though not every one takes a genuine delight in the *Religio Medici*. Battles raged and kingdoms fell, but that did not prevent Isaac Walton from practising the most peaceful of recreations and writing the



fisherman's supreme classic, while Milton was deserting his diviner muse to produce the *Areopagitica*, a masterpiece in political prose literature.

With the exception of *Comus* the great masterpieces of Puritan literature were actually produced after the Restoration. But the voices which prevailed were not those of Puritans. Milton was the survivor of an age of idealists, when men fought for causes with a splendid devotion, however antagonistic the causes themselves might be; when they were ready to die for "Church and King" or for "the Houses and the Word." The old ideals had shattered themselves. The new age which had dawned was

materialist and cynical. The past age had been too much in earnest to be clever and witty; the new age was supremely clever and witty, being no longer in earnest. Therefore its tragedy was insincere, stilted, and unconvincing. Its comedy was brilliant, but it was not merely non-moral and irresponsible; it assumed in its reaction against Puritanism that virtue is redeemed from being contemptible only when circumstances render it comic. And the note of the Restoration prevailed through the Revolution; the claims of decency remained in abeyance, so far as polite society was concerned, until the seventeenth century had passed. Milton, as we have said, belongs to the earlier age. Besides Bunyan's, the one other great literary name of the era is that of John Dryden, whose work practically covers the period from the Restoration to the end of the century. As befits the times in which he



John Dryden.

[From the engraving by Houbraken.]

lived, Dryden's supreme achievement was in the field of satire. His political pieces *Absalom and Achitophel* and the *Hind and the Panther* are unsurpassed in their kind. But satire is essentially intellectual, appealing to the intelligent critical judgment, the taste of the audience. If the poet's function is to express his own sense of beauty, what the Greeks meant by the phrase which we translate as "the beautiful," and to arouse the perception of it in others, the satirist is not a poet, since he is mainly concerned with denouncing and exposing the antithesis of the beautiful. Satire is the natural product of materialist conditions.

Such conditions, on the other hand, are rather favourable to scientific inquiry, though they are by no means necessary to it. The era of the Restoration and the Revolution was one during which England achieved far more distinction in natural science and in the literature of Rationalism than in the literature of imagination and emotion. But the scientific movement had its birth at a much earlier date, in the reign of James I.,



when Harvey was demonstrating the theory of the circulation of the blood and Bacon was formulating afresh the whole system of scientific thought. Living political problems inspired speculative inquiry into the bases of the political structure and the organisation of society. Advocates of parliamentary control began to assert that kings were nothing more than the chief magistrates of the states over which they ruled. Advocates of Absolutism discovered that they ruled by right divine, which it was profanity to question. Thomas Hobbes, the disciple and sometime secretary of Francis Bacon, recognised in politics a branch of the universal science conceived by his master; and being himself a convinced Absolutist, he endeavoured to discover a basis for Absolutism more satisfying to the reason than the theory of Divine Right. He evolved his own peculiar doctrine of the Social Contract, promulgated in the work which he called *Leviathan*. Mankind being by nature in a condition of war, every man against every other man, the warring units discovered that each of them could profit more, individually, by acting in consort with others for mutual assistance. But the individual had no guarantee that his consorts would not play him false; some coercive power was required. Hence men entered into a contract with each other to recognise and enforce the supreme authority of some one person or body of persons. Here was the nucleus of the state, the whole body of persons who entered into the contract which was *ipso facto* binding upon all persons born under the contract. But it was not a contract between the ruler and the ruled, but between the ruled among themselves; a contract from which they could not free themselves without dissolving society altogether. Society therefore has no rights as against the ruler; the ruler has obligations, but in respect of them he is responsible to himself and the Almighty and to no one else. But the doctrine of Thomas Hobbes, published in the early years of the Commonwealth, was by no means to the taste of the clerical royalism of the day, since it uncompromisingly subjected religion to the authority of the absolute ruler of the state. On the other hand, the theory of the Social Contract was appropriated and modified by the Constitutionals, and was formulated by John Locke in his *Theory of Civil Government*, the text-book of the Revolution Whigs. The king was bound by the contract, being himself a party to it in the primary constitution of society. If he broke his part of the contract, the other parties to it were released from their obligation, not of recognising a supreme authority, but of continuing to regard him personally as the seat of that authority, of which the ultimate sanction was the will of the society as a whole. The names of Hobbes and Locke, widely though they differ, stand at the head of the peculiarly English school of moral and political philosophy.

But the highest distinction was reserved for the leaders of English progress in natural science, one of whom stands second to none, whether in English or in European records. The discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton



in the field of physics revolutionised men's knowledge of the Universe. Not Darwin himself effected so fundamental a change in the imaginative conception of an infinite creation, apart from the vast practical bearings of the new knowledge. Perhaps the most creditable trait in the character of Charles II. was his genuine interest in scientific inquiry. To Charles we owe the foundation of the Royal Society; and beside the supreme name of Isaac Newton stand those of the astronomer Flamsteed, of Boyle the father of modern chemistry, and of Ray the founder of the science of zoology.



Head-piece from the Book of Common Prayer, 1662.



# BOOK V

## THE BRITISH EMPIRE

### CHAPTER XXII

#### QUEEN ANNE

##### I

#### MARLBOROUGH

THE death of William III. left Whigs and Tories very evenly balanced in the House of Commons, while the Whigs had a small majority in the Peers. On the great pressing question of the hour, however, Whigs and Tories were for the time being at one. With few exceptions the Tories as well as the Whigs were a war party. Under these conditions William would have worked with a ministry mainly Whig, since the Whigs would have given him the stronger personal support. The Crown was still so strong that nothing short of a marked predominance in the Opposition would outweigh the king's personal predilections in selecting ministers and directing policy. Although William's successor was very far from possessing a strong character, this dominance of the Crown lasted throughout her reign. The queen chose her own ministers, and she did not select them because they represented the dominant party in the House of Commons. The queen's choice was generally managed by the reigning favourite. The reigning favourite at the moment of her accession was Sarah, as yet only Countess of Marlborough; and for eight years her ascendancy was the governing factor in English politics. Marlborough himself still counted as a Tory, though his party ties were of the slenderest. His closest personal ally was Godolphin, whose son had married one of Marlborough's daughters, while another was the wife of the young Earl of Sunderland, who this year succeeded to the title. Godolphin's Toryism, too, was by no means deeply rooted.

The natural effect of Anne's accession was in the first place to give the Tories the ascendancy in her ministry, but in the ministry itself the real supremacy lay with Marlborough; and since Marlborough was the inheritor of William's foreign policy, which was essentially that of the Whigs



and only accidentally that of the Tories, it followed that Marlborough and his ally Godolphin presently found themselves relying upon the Whigs and parting from the Tories. The curious fact is that Marlborough's own supremacy depended on his wife's ascendancy over the mind of the queen. When Anne freed herself from the yoke of the Duchess Sarah, Marlborough's supremacy collapsed. It was not the Revolution but the Hanoverian Succession which placed the Crown in subjection to parliament. At the moment of Anne's accession, however, everything pointed to the ascendancy of Tory policy. By associating itself with the war, the party

had saved its credit with the country. The queen's personal predilections were Tory, notably on questions connected with Church and Dissent, and a period of Whig depression was generally anticipated.

On the continent William's death appeared to be a ground for infinite congratulation for Louis XIV. For thirty years past William's patient, indomitable, remorseless resistance was the one obstacle which had constantly checked the French King's ambitions, and had more definitely foiled them since he had brought England to join forces with Holland. William was the diplomatist who had combined the powers against France, the general who had neutralised victory after victory



Queen Anne.

[From the painting by Kneller.]

of the French arms. William had been the soul and brain of the resistance to French aggression. And now the great antagonist had disappeared, at a moment when Louis occupied a position more advantageous than ever before. His grandson Philip was *de facto* king of Spain, and was accepted as king by Spain. French troops were in occupation of the Spanish Netherlands. Within the German Empire the Elector of Bavaria, Max Emanuel, had allied himself with Louis out of hostility to the Emperor. His alliance with Savoy gave him the entry of Italy. No one as yet knew that the allies had the two greatest soldiers of the day to lead them, and that one of them was not only a much greater military genius than William had been, but was hardly if at all inferior to him as a diplomatist.

Ostensibly the War of the Spanish Succession was a dynastic struggle



to decide whether the crown of Spain should rest on the head of a Hapsburg or of a Bourbon, a question of the balance of power to prevent the undue preponderance of France in Europe, a question in which England would hardly have been concerned but for the wound inflicted on her *amour propre* by the French king's recognition of a king of England whom England herself had rejected—another dynastic question. But in actual fact matters of vital interest were at stake. If England had stood aside, France and Spain between them would have taken complete possession of Italy and the Netherlands, and there would have been very little left of Holland. France and Spain would have been so closely united that they would have counted practically as a single power, and might have developed a maritime strength which would have become more than a menace to English naval supremacy. The whole of the Bourbon dominion would have been closed for British commerce, while the British colonies in America and the British trade in the East would have been seriously endangered. These possibilities had passed long before the war was actually over; but when the war began they were imminent perils. Neither statesmen nor merchants probably had any very definite idea of a British Empire as the stake for which the nation was fighting; but the mercantile interest, which was chiefly associated with the Whig party, was very much aware that unless the nation fought its commerce would be in jeopardy.

Fighting between France and Austria had already begun in Italy; and the allies whom William had brought together were much relieved to find that William's death would not withdraw England from the alliance. William himself, at the close of his reign, had settled upon Marlborough as the man to carry out his policy. Marlborough, conscious where his own supreme genius lay, was certain to feel that the road of his ambitions lay through European battlefields; and Marlborough's influence at home was ensured by the relations between the Countess Sarah and Queen Anne. War was declared in May, and William's nominee occupied his place as commander-in-chief of the allied army.

The new chief's operations were seriously hampered by the fact that instead of his having a free hand his plans were liable to be vetoed by a body of Dutch commissioners or "field deputies," who were not by any means military experts, while their views of the purposes to be served were strictly confined to the immediate securing of Holland against invasion. Marlborough, prohibited by them from seeking to destroy the French army in the field, had to content himself with manœuvres which forced the enemy back from the line of the Meuse. A series of forts were captured and Marlborough's reputation, which had hitherto been called in question, was established by the campaign, though his accomplishment fell far short of what he would have aimed at achieving if his hands had not been tied. In England his success was rewarded by his elevation to a Dukedom.

Meanwhile, an expedition had been despatched to Cadiz under Sir



George Rooke, which failed there ignominiously ; but his fleet redeemed his credit by breaking the boom of the harbour of Vigo, where it destroyed a powerful French squadron, and sank the most part of a great treasure fleet, after securing booty to the value of about a million sterling.

Again, in 1703, the French confined themselves to a campaign in the Netherlands, and again the Dutch sought to confine Marlborough to a campaign of sieges. His operations were marred by the disobedience to orders of the Dutch generals, and the flat refusal of the Dutch field deputies to sanction his design of falling upon the main French force.



John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough.  
[After the painting by Van der Werff.]

The campaign, therefore, was marked with no striking results. Meanwhile France had designed what should have been a paralysing blow to the Grand Alliance. Marshal Villars from the Upper Rhine, the Elector of Bavaria, and Vendôme from Italy, were to effect a junction and strike straight at Vienna. The plan was frustrated by the unforeseen. Villars and the Elector joined hands ; but then the latter proceeded into the Tirol, a province of Austria which had been promised to him with careless generosity by the French king. He meant to secure the Tirol and to join the French as they came up from Italy by the Brenner Pass. But the Tirolese, who were not parties to this arrangement, handled the electoral troops so roughly that Max Emanuel evacuated the country and declared himself unable

to proceed to Vienna. Moreover, no French column came from Italy, because Victor Amadeus of Savoy played his favourite game of changing sides at the critical moment. He fell upon Vendôme's communications, and the French general had to turn back instead of advancing to join hands with Villars.

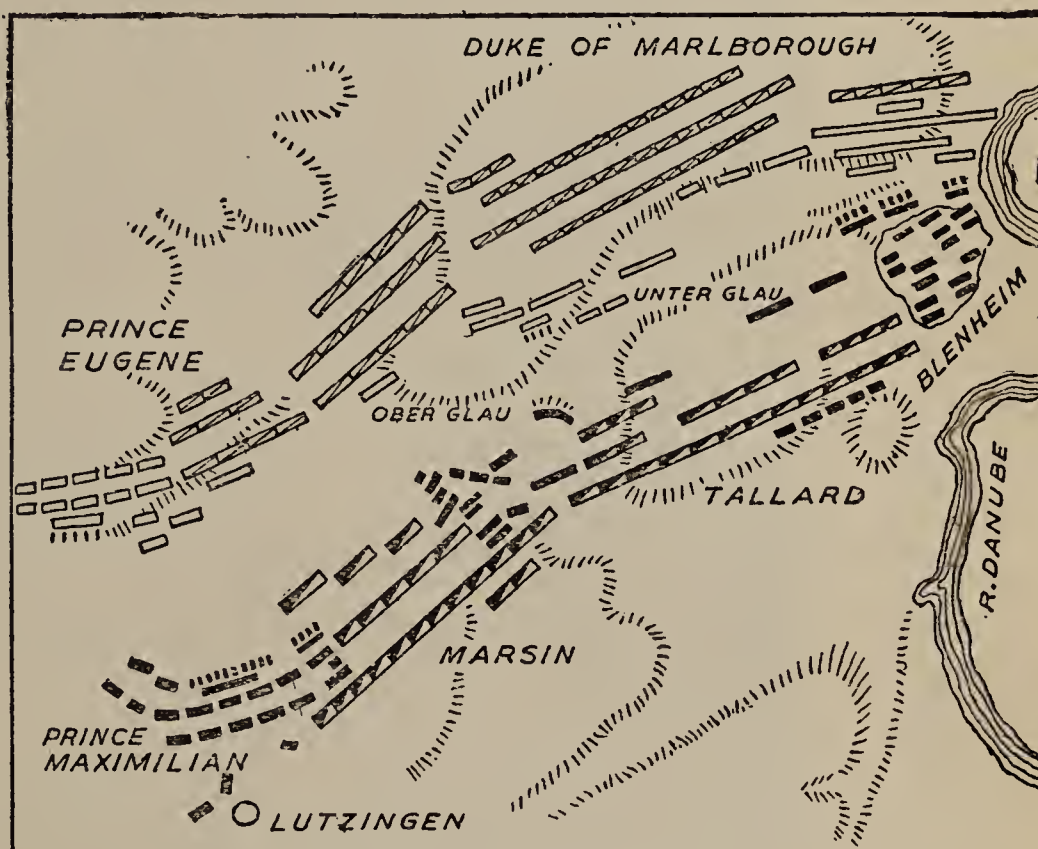
Now Austria was in no plight to resist a French invasion in force, supported by Bavaria. On the east she was harassed by a Hungarian rebellion ; and her military organisation was in a state of desperate disorder, which Prince Eugene was patiently struggling to remedy. Austria owed the services of that brilliant commander to the fact that when he offered his sword to France some years before, when his talents were still unknown, she had declined. Though the French scheme of invasion had been baulked in 1703, it was to be carried out next year on a less complicated plan of campaign. Vienna was doomed, unless England and Holland came to the rescue, and neither England nor Holland would dream of withdrawing



forces from the Netherlands in order to take care of Austria. It was true that if the power of Austria were shattered France would be able to concentrate the whole of her force on the Netherlands ; but English Tories had a vague conviction that English troops ought not to be fighting on the continent at all, certainly not further off than Holland ; and the Dutch did not look further than the defence of their own frontier.

Marlborough appreciated the situation and formed his own plan, which had to be carried out without being suspected either in England or in Holland, to say nothing of France. He required a confidant in Holland and another in England to hoodwink the two governments while he con-

certed his scheme with Eugene. From England he obtained an authority which sufficed for his purpose ; from the Dutch he procured permission to conduct a campaign on the Moselle with a large force. To the Moselle went Marlborough with his army ; the great French force still on the Upper Rhine awaited developments. Suddenly Marlborough vanished ; he was racing through Germany to Bavaria to join Eugene, and was fairly out of



Plan of the Battle of Blenheim.

reach before Dutch or English could make any attempt to stop him. On the way he joined a German force under Lewis of Baden.

Bavaria was commanded by a hostile force holding the heights of Schellenberg, by Donauwerth ; the position was stormed and carried. Meanwhile Tallard, who had taken the place of Villars as commander of the army of invasion on the Rhine, had started on his march to join the Elector of Bavaria and the French forces under Marsin which were already in that region. By August 12th Marlborough had effected his junction with Eugene, and the hostile armies lay facing each other, the river or stream of the Nebel flowing between them into the Danube. The French right was in the village of Blenheim on the bank of the great river. It was the task of Eugene on the right of the allies to keep the French left in play when the great battle was fought on the 13th. It was not till mid-day that the allies opened the attack, which was developed on the two wings. At four in the afternoon every attack had been beaten back, but the French centre had been weakened to strengthen the wings. It was at this point



that Marlborough reconstructed his lines for a furious assault upon the French centre, which was pierced. The French right was rolled up, and nearly the whole of it was cut to pieces, driven into the Danube, or forced to surrender ; the left, principally the Bavarian contingent, for the most part made its escape, since the victorious army was unable to follow up the pursuit. But the victory was absolutely decisive and crushing. The French were driven back behind the Rhine, and there was no more thought or talk of a French army threatening Vienna. Marlborough returned to the Netherlands.

Meanwhile Admiral Rooke had been despatched with intent to an attack upon Toulon, the naval control of the Mediterranean being very definitely a part of Marlborough's conception of the war policy as a whole. He did not attack Toulon, because the Duke of Savoy was unable to co-operate as had been intended. Though he had a great fleet it appeared that he would have made no use of it at all if he had not been goaded into trying what could be done with Gibraltar. When the attack was made it was found that the place was practically incapable of offering resistance. It was seized in the name of King Charles III.—that is, the Austrian Archduke Charles, the son to whom the Austrian Emperor had finally made over his own claim to the Spanish throne—and was garrisoned with English troops. Little general importance seems to have been attached to the capture at the time except by Marlborough, who declared that no cost should be spared to make it secure. Thus accidentally the great fortress passed into English control.

The last parliament of William III. was also the first parliament of Queen Anne's reign. It was dissolved in the summer of 1702, and the new House of Commons, which met in the autumn, showed a large Tory preponderance. The small Whig majority in the Lords was due to the presence of the latitudinarian bishops appointed under William—men who were in sympathy with the principles of toleration. The queen and the Tories were antagonistic to the Nonconformists. The bulk of the Tories were opposed to Marlborough, not on the general principle of maintaining the war, but because they wished to restrict it to the sea so far as England was concerned ; whereas Marlborough, like William, while he understood better than the Tories themselves the importance of naval supremacy and the way to secure it, was also determined that England should take the lead upon land as well. Thus practically from the outset there was a growing estrangement between Marlborough and Godolphin on the one hand and the Tories on the other, while the duchess exerted herself to ally her husband with the Whigs, and to manage the queen on the same lines. The advanced Tories for their part endeavoured to establish a complete Tory ascendancy, increasingly antagonistic to Marlborough himself. The struggle between Tories and Whigs was to a very considerable extent a contest between the Commons and the Lords. In this contest the Lords were victorious. They were able to defeat the attempt of the





THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM (OR HOCHSTAEDT), AUGUST 13, 1704

A reference to the map on page 553 will render clear the positions of the opposing armies of Marlborough and Prince Eugene and those of the French and Bavarians. From a print by J. van Huchtenburgh.







Commons to apply the late Act of Succession so as to exclude from the House of Lords the Dutchmen who had received peerages from William. They defeated also an Occasional Conformity Bill, which now became a favourite scheme of the Tories. William's Toleration Act had conceded freedom of worship to the Nonconformists, but retained the tests which required all office-holders to participate in Anglican services. Nonconformists in general, while habitually attending their own places of worship, did not find it against their consciences to make the necessary attendances at the Anglican rites, so that the still valid Corporation and Test Acts did not in effect preclude them from taking office. The object of the High Churchmen was to disqualify these Occasional Conformists by penalising them heavily if they attended the religious services of any body other than that of the Church of England while they held office. This attempt also the Lords were able to frustrate. Popular sentiment was at first on the High Church side, but a strong reaction was produced, in part at least by an ironical pamphlet entitled *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, which pretended to be an inflammatory appeal to all good Churchmen to insist on the extirpation of the enemies of Church and State. The satire on the Tory programme was convincing, and the Tories only made matters worse for themselves by having the author, Daniel Defoe, set in the pillory. The punishment provided the audacious pamphleteer with a popular ovation.

The Blenheim campaign saved what may be called the Marlborough Administration. The Tories had been studiously minimising the Duke's doings on the continent ; but the attempt to belittle Blenheim itself recoiled on their own heads. The victory was in effect a Whig triumph. A general election in the spring of 1705 gave a small Whig majority in the Commons, where Harley, the leader of the moderate Tories, alone of that party remained firmly attached to the Ministry, since Marlborough and Godolphin must now be reckoned as Whigs. But the administration was also reinforced by Henry St. John, the most brilliant of the younger Tories. The remaining members of the party were soon displaced by pronounced Whigs. The Government thus formed devoted itself to the whole-hearted carrying out of Marlborough's war policy ; but it achieved something still more vital to the future of the British Empire in carrying through the Incorporating Union between England and Scotland.

## II

### THE UNION

An Incorporating Union between England and Scotland was a project which William III. had been anxious to carry through ; and one of his last public acts was to commend such a scheme to the consideration of the Scottish parliament. The existing arrangement, which united the crowns



only, was fraught with danger ; for Scotland it was intolerable. As matters stood, England was practically able to treat Scotland as a hostile country whose commercial interests were to be ruined for the benefit of England ; while the Union of the Crowns left the weaker and poorer country no means of defending herself except commercial retaliation, which could inflict no great harm in England but must inevitably be ruinous to Scotland herself. With the Union dissolved, Scotland could at least follow the ancient policy of allying herself with the enemies of England abroad ; and separation appealed to the Scottish mind as being a restoration of Scotland's ancient independence. An independent Scotland could not be ignored by England ; a Scotland tied to her as Scotland was now tied could be ignored altogether. The fact had become most patent during William's own reign. Though he himself had been unable to visit his northern kingdom, he had not been unpopular there in spite of Glencoe and the Darien failure. In the one case he was held to have been misled by Dalrymple, and in the other to have been rather the victim of irresistible pressure than a free agent. But it was precisely in that fact that Scottish hostility to the existing arrangement found its strongest argument. If such a king as William found himself compelled to subordinate Scottish to English interests, in spite of his zeal for even-handed justice, it was hardly possible that Scotland should not suffer yet more under another king who wore the English crown. The one condition, therefore, which could make the Union of the Crowns tolerable was commercial equality. Scotland was practically agreed that the alternative to commercial equality was separation ; and the threat of separation was the one means by which commercial equality might be obtained.

There was no possible question of Scotland's right to separate herself from England. The two nations were bound together by nothing whatever except the accident that a King of Scotland had succeeded to the throne of England as the legitimate heir a hundred years before. Since that time each nation had asserted its own right to lay down a rule of succession for itself. The English Commonwealth indeed, for its own preservation, had asserted its right to forbid Scotland by force of arms to set up as a separate kingdom under a Stuart monarch ; but there was no possibility of questioning that, for so doing she had no other authority than that of superior force. At the Restoration England herself had cancelled the absorption of Scotland. Both countries had rejected James II., and both had accepted William ; but the Acts by which England had fixed the course of the succession to the English throne were in no sense binding upon Scotland, which had not committed itself any further than the acceptance of Anne. Though England had selected the Electress Sophia and her heirs, Scotland was perfectly free to settle the Scottish succession on some one else.

Now England had hitherto turned a deaf ear to all Scottish complaints on the score of her commercial policy. The recognised English mercantile doctrine was that foreign products should not be allowed to compete



with home products at all in the home market, or in the foreign market so far as such competition could be prevented. With greater insight the Commonwealth had realised that English commerce would not suffer by freeing the trade with Scotland, Ireland, and the Colonies. But with the Restoration England had reverted to the earlier theory. She believed that something very tangible would be required to compensate her for any concession on the point; and hitherto Scotland had had nothing very tangible to offer. But now came the Scottish threat of separation. The Scottish parliament passed what was called the Act of Security, which asserted the right of the nation to nominate as successor to the throne of Scotland some other person than the Electress Sophia. It claimed also that the great officers should be nominated by the Scottish parliament, whose consent should be necessary to any declaration of war on the part of a king of Scotland who was also king of England. Here then was something tangible. Nothing short of an incorporating union could preclude the possibility that now or at some future time the exiled Stuarts might be restored in Scotland, and England might be hampered as of old by a hostile state in the North, ready to attack her whenever she should find herself embroiled with continental powers, and ready also to support a Jacobite revolt. Immunity from that danger was worth purchasing at the cost of commercial concessions. On the other hand, Scotland could hardly be secure of the permanence of commercial concessions unless they were guaranteed by an incorporating union. The problem was to frame an incorporating union sufficiently attractive to Scotland to counterbalance the Nationalist bias towards separation. For half Scotland was convinced that no union whatever could be devised which would not subordinate Scottish to English interests.

The Convention in Scotland which had called William to the throne, and had by him been continued as a parliament, had never been dissolved; Scotland had no Triennial Act. It was exceedingly doubtful whether this assembly had any validity as a parliament beyond the term of William's own reign. Nevertheless it was this parliament which opened the negotiations for a union with England at the moment when a House of Commons had just been returned with a large Tory majority. The moment therefore was unfavourable, because, whereas the Whigs followed William in favouring the idea of the union, the Tories as a natural consequence were antagonistic. The conference therefore between the Scottish and English commissioners which was held in the winter of 1702-3 was unsatisfactory. The authority of the Scottish commissioners was dubious, and Scottish Nationalists had already repudiated the authority of the parliament. The English commissioners, though ready to make concessions, still fell considerably short of the minimum of the Scottish demands.

The election of a new parliament in Scotland whose legal authority should be beyond question left the real Unionists, headed by Queensberry, decidedly weak; while the Nationalists, or "Country Party," seemed likely



to gain the support of the extreme section who called themselves Cavaliers, with most of those who were as yet indisposed to commit themselves to one side or the other. The head of this coalition was that Duke of Hamilton who figures in Thackeray's *Esmond*. The real chief of the uncompromising Nationalists was Fletcher of Saltoun. It was the parliament thus composed which passed the Act of Security already referred to, in which the crucial clause declared that, after Anne, the same person should be incapable of being king or queen of both England and Scotland unless England had conceded "a free communication of trade, the freedom of navigation, and the liberty of the Plantations," that is to say, of the colonies. The Act did not receive the royal assent this year, but did so in the following year after it had again been passed with the commercial clause omitted.

The Act of Security received the royal assent almost on the day when Marlborough was winning the battle of Blenheim. The event was unknown; disaster was still possible; if the royal assent had been refused, Scotland would have refused the money to pay the army, and if Marlborough had been defeated on the Danube, a very critical situation would have arisen. After Blenheim, the English Government no longer felt that it would be imperilled by anything that Scotland might do. The immediate reply of the Whigs to the Act of Security was contained in measures stiffening the barriers to Scottish trade, ordering the north of England to be put in a state of defence, and treating all Scots as aliens unless and until Scotland should adopt the line of succession laid down for the English Crown. But these measures were accompanied by further proposals for a union; and again in April 1706 commissioners from the two countries were assembled to discuss terms.

The Scots proposed in effect a commercial union under one crown, the two countries retaining their separate legislatures. The English insisted that the union of legislatures and the acceptance of the English rule of succession were a *sine qua non*. The Scots required with equal emphasis that the freedom of trade should be part of the bargain. These conditions having been accepted by both sides, there remained questions of detail as to the treatment of finance, the composition of the united legislature, and the security in Scotland of the national religion and national institutions. In July nearly the whole of the commissioners signed the articles; but the ratification by both parliaments was still necessary. The English commissioners had done a good deal towards disarming opposition by the liberality of their financial concessions and by the reasonableness of their demands as to the relative strength of the representation of the two nations in the parliament of Great Britain. Before the Scottish Estates met in the autumn to discuss the acceptance of the treaty, the English parliament had withdrawn the hostile measures with which they had responded to the Act of Security. Marlborough's later successes in the Netherlands had confirmed the results of Blenheim,



and neither Nationalists nor Jacobites in Scotland could use the fear of France as a lever for gaining their own ends.

Nevertheless, it was still far from certain that the treaty would be accepted. On one side there were the zealots of the Covenant, who feared for the independence of the Scottish Kirk, on the other the Jacobitism which was wide-spread in the Highlands, though comparatively inactive in the Lowlands. Everywhere, even among men who were rationally convinced of the substantial benefits that would arise from the union, there was a sentimental antipathy to anything which savoured of diminishing national independence. It was possible with perfect honesty, and easy by means of deliberate exaggeration and misrepresentation, to excite a passion of emotional hostility, insomuch that hardly any one believed that the union would be carried without bloodshed. But the opposition was overcome, not without the employment of influence which a strict political morality would have rejected as corrupt. The leaders of the opposition were divided. But when the crucial clause deciding the question of the legislative union came up for final decision, Hamilton abstained from voting, and the clause was carried by a substantial majority.

The Scottish Act of Union received the royal assent in January 1707; that of the English parliament received it in March. The Acts came in force on the 1st May, and from that time England and Scotland, while their separate nationalities remained intact, were merged in the single Power of Great Britain.

From a strictly constitutional point of view, the government of England was modified at the Union by nothing more than the addition of forty-five Scottish members to the House of Commons and of sixteen Scottish peers to the House of Lords. So far as the sovereignty of the country lay with the parliament there was no change. It was not so with Scotland, where it was only during the reign of William III. that parliament had claimed powers approximating to those of the English Estates. The Union in fact applied the English system to Scotland. On the other hand, it prepared the way for Scotland to exercise a very effective influence in the policy and the concerns of Great Britain. Scottish Nationalism was respected, the Presbyterian Scottish establishment was secured, the Scottish system of law and Scottish institutions generally were preserved. Although the Treaty of Union could not in effect debar the sovereign parliament of Great Britain from occasionally modifying the original terms, the fact still remained that it would be exceedingly dangerous to the public welfare and the public peace for the parliament of Great Britain to introduce modifications which were not acceptable to the Scottish people.

When there was no longer any differentiation between English and Scottish trade and shipping, the way was cleared for an immense development of Scottish energy and Scottish wealth, although half a century was to pass before the effects were thoroughly realised. At the moment and for years to come the Union was not popular in Scotland; it had been



carried because the Unionists proved themselves more skilful party managers than the Nationalist stalwarts. The opposition to Jacobitism was much weakened in the northern country by the expectation that national independence would be restored with the Restoration of the Stuarts. It was not till the Jacobites had played their last card and lost the game for good and all at Culloden that Scotland became sufficiently reconciled to the Union to turn it to full account.

## III

## THE WHIG ASCENDENCY

The year which followed Blenheim was a trying one for Marlborough. His design for an effective invasion of France was frustrated by the failure of the imperialist troops to co-operate. He succeeded during the summer in piercing the French lines with his English and Dutch forces; but when he would have followed up the success, he was paralysed by the obstinacy of the Dutch field deputies and the misconduct of some of the Dutch commanders. There was the usual tendency of the English and Dutch, each to suspect the others of playing for their own interests. Through the winter Marlborough was engaged in diplomatic efforts to bring the new Emperor Joseph and the German States which had joined the alliance effectively into line. Yet, although his hand was strengthened in Holland by a reaction in his favour, brought about by the discovery of the misconduct of some of the Dutch generals, Holland refused in 1706 to sanction his design of carrying an allied force into Italy and sweeping the French out of that country as he had previously swept them behind the Rhine. The Northern German States were equally averse from sharing in such remote expeditions.

Nevertheless he found his opportunity for dealing another destructive blow to the French in the Netherlands. The Dutch for once abstained from tying his hands, and at the battle of Ramillies in May he inflicted a tremendous defeat upon the French marshal Villeroi. The result of the victory was a general evacuation by the French of Flanders and Brabant. From Ostend to Brussels and Louvain the whole region before the end of the year passed into the possession of the allies. Moreover, the battle itself produced such an effect on the German princes that they yielded to Marlborough's exhortations, and sent their troops to Italy, where the campaign, conducted by Prince Eugene, cleared the French out of the country.

During these two years also the allies were possessed with illusory ideas on the subject of the Spanish Peninsula itself. The plain fact was that the entire peninsula, with the exception of the kingdom of Portugal and the province of Catalonia, was on the side of Philip. The Catalonians,



who had been robbed of cherished political rights by the supremacy of Castile, flung themselves into the cause of the Archduke Charles ; Portugal had confirmed the alliance with England which had originated at the time of the Restoration in England. Portugal and Catalonia gave the great maritime Power an entry to Spain both on the west and on the east. Imperial and British troops were sent to Spain, the latter under the command of the brilliant but exceedingly erratic Lord Peterborough. Successes of a remarkable character were achieved in a most unorthodox manner ; but it was no more possible for the English and Imperialists to carry out an effective conquest of Spain against the will of the Spanish people than for France to achieve the same object a hundred years later. Although in 1706 it seemed for a time that the Bourbon cause was lost, its ascendancy was recovered in the following year at the battle of Almanza. The French on this occasion were commanded by the Duke of Berwick, an illegitimate son of James II., whose mother was Marlborough's sister.

Again in that year, 1707, Marlborough's great naval designs were frustrated. None of the allies could be easily persuaded to take part wholeheartedly in any share of a

general scheme in which their own individual interests did not obviously occupy the first place. The clearance of Italy in 1706 opened the way for the invasion of France from the south-east. Marlborough designed such an invasion, with which the British fleet (as it must be called from this date) was to co-operate. The objective was to be Toulon, and the capture of Toulon would turn the Mediterranean into a British lake. But since this presented itself as a merely British interest to the Austrians, no energy was applied to the project. All that Austria and Savoy really cared about was to secure the Italian land frontier against French invasion.

During 1707 Marlborough himself was again engaged in diplomacy, not on campaigning. Charles XII. of Sweden had started on his astonishing and meteoric career. He had grievances against the Emperor, and there was serious danger that his sword would be thrown into the scale, in effect against the Grand Alliance. In part at least it was due to Marlborough that the danger passed, and Charles plunged into Russia,



The Allied Forces going into action at Ramillies.

[From a medal struck to commemorate the victory.]



a country which was just beginning to assume European importance under Peter the Great.

The situation at the end of 1706 looked so ill for France that Louis was prepared to seek peace with the allies on the terms of giving up the Bourbon claim to Spain and the Netherlands. The terms, however, were rejected by the allies, and the events of 1707 on the whole gave some encouragement to France. Hence a vigorous defensive campaign was planned in the Netherlands for the next year. Marlborough was hampered as usual by the difficulty of obtaining the co-operation of the German forces, whose Northern army had now been placed under the command of

the Elector of Hanover, the future George I. of England. Eugene, however, released from Italy, was now bringing up a third army to the North; and with him Marlborough could always count upon cordial agreement.

But before a junc-

tion could be effected some of the recently occupied Netherland towns revolted against the Dutch ascendancy, and the French were threatening Oudenarde. Marlborough could not afford to wait for the whole of Eugene's army, though he was joined by Eugene in person. By rapid and skilful movements he was able to fling himself upon the French forces near Oudenarde and to inflict upon them a decisive defeat, though too late in the afternoon to effect the complete destruction of the French army. The victory enabled Marlborough to prevent the French from recovering Ostend, after another brilliant action had been fought by General Webb at Wynendael. Before the end of the year the important fortress of Lille surrendered. Another valuable capture bears further witness to Marlborough's understanding of the meaning of naval supremacy. It was owing to his urgency that a force was despatched to Minorca, Port Mahon seized, and the island occupied, a winter naval station in the Mediterranean being thereby provided for the British fleets. The design was carried out by Lord Stanhope; the island remained a British possession till its loss in 1756.

Ever since Blenheim the power of the Whigs at home had been steadily increasing. The party was controlled by a group known as the Junto, consisting of Lord Somers, Charles Montague, who had become Lord Halifax, and must not be confused with the "Trimmer" Halifax of the Revolution, Sunderland, Wharton, and Lord Orford—that Admiral Russell



A medal celebrating the French defeat at Oudenarde.



who had won the battle of La Hogue. It was the completeness of their agreement with Marlborough and Godolphin with regard to the war which bound these two chiefs to the Whig party, of which they were not professedly members. The Tories, Harley and St. John, endeavoured to undermine the Whig influence through Abigail Hill (Mrs. Masham), a kinswoman both of Harley and of the Duchess of Marlborough. The intrigue was detected at the beginning of 1708, Harley was removed, and the ministry became exclusively Whig, though Mrs. Masham still retained the ear of the queen in spite of the Duchess. A general election in the summer confirmed the Whig ascendancy, all the more because the majority of the Scots in both Houses for practical purposes increased the majority of the Whigs. Their victory in Parliament was capped by the successful campaigns of the year and the apparent prostration of France.

So complete was this prostration that Louis was ready to accept almost any terms for peace. He was willing to withdraw even from active support of his grandson's claim to the Spanish throne, and to surrender to the Dutch sundry fortresses in the Netherlands which would serve as a barrier against French aggression. But the Emperor was not satisfied with the terms; and neither the Whigs nor Marlborough wanted peace, Marlborough for obvious reasons, and the Whigs because they were afraid that peace would be followed by a Tory reaction. The war party were afraid that Holland might be tempted by the offers of Louis to make a separate treaty on her own account; against this they secured themselves by the Barrier Treaty with Holland engaging to secure her still more favourable terms. The demands finally formulated for the acceptance of the French king were in plain terms intolerable; for he was required not only to withdraw his support from Philip but to employ French troops in ejecting him from Spain, on which Louis very pertinently observed that if he must fight some one he would fight not his friends but his enemies.

A wave of fiery enthusiasm ensued. A new army was drawn together, ill-fed and ill-clad but burning with patriotic ardour. Under the command of Villars, the best of the French marshals, it met Marlborough and Eugene at Malplaquet. The formal victory fell to the allies, but at the cost of terrific carnage, and losses heavier than those of the French, who were able to beat an orderly and secure retreat. It was a Pyrrhic victory; though it enabled the victors to capture some more fortresses in the course of the next twelve months, they had been punished too severely to strike any decisive blow. And when the



Queen Anne clipping the wings of the Gallic cock.

[A contemporary caricature of the French position in 1708.]



twelve months were past, the war party was no longer in the ascendant in England.

Again, in Spain renewed campaigning went on the whole favourably to the allies through the first half of 1710, but the Spaniards remained obstinately loyal to Philip. In the autumn they received more reinforcements from France, and at the end of the year the small British contingent under Stanhope forming the rearguard of the allied army was surprised and compelled to surrender at Brihuega. The other successes of the allies had little effect beyond hardening their hearts to the persistent rejection of peace proposals.

In the meanwhile matters had been going ill with the ministry in



The campaigns of Marlborough.

England. In 1709 the Duchess of Marlborough's influence with the queen was waning, and all Anne's personal sympathies were with the Tories. Moreover, there was serious friction between the Junto on one hand and Godolphin and Marlborough on the other. In the winter both Marlborough and the Junto committed serious blunders. Marlborough, anxious to secure his own position above party, applied to the queen to be made Captain-General for life. The fact sufficed by itself to destroy his popularity and to arouse ominous suspicions that he was scheming for a military dictatorship. The Whigs found their own pitfall in an outbreak of High Church fanaticism. An egregious divine, Dr. Henry Sacheverell, had long made himself notorious by his attacks upon dissenters and upon the latitudinarian bishops. On November 5th he preached in St. Paul's an egregious sermon denouncing toleration and comprehension, directed against prominent politicians and more particularly against Godolphin, to whom he



referred by the popular nickname of Volpone, taken from Ben Jonson's play.

The thing itself was of no serious consequence, but it was typical of the attitude of the High Clerical Tories who represented Whig ascendancy as a danger to the Church. The Whig leaders, urged on by the vindictiveness of Godolphin, resolved to silence the political extravagances of the pulpit instead of leaving them alone. Sacheverell was impeached, and was forthwith prematurely glorified as a martyr; his trial caused as much excitement as that of the seven bishops. The real object of the Whigs in the prosecution, apart from Godolphin's personal feeling of vindictiveness, was to procure the condemnation of the prevalent Tory doctrines as subversive of the principles of the Revolution and as being in fact veiled Jacobitism. There was not much difficulty, however, in representing their action as mere persecution of a political opponent. The Doctor was a



A High Church caricature on the Sacheverell prosecution, 1710.

fashionable preacher, and the fashionable audience who attended his trial were moved to sympathetic tears by his eloquent defence. The Peers, by a small majority, found him guilty of the charges, but they had taken alarm at the popular excitement; the queen was known to be favourable to the culprit; and the sentence merely suspended him from preaching for three years, and ordered the obnoxious sermon to be publicly burnt. The Whigs had only succeeded in making themselves look foolish.

Through the early months of 1710 Harley was secretly intriguing to sow dissensions among the Whig chiefs and to foster the queen's increasing determination to escape from the yoke of Duchess Sarah. He brought into play the erratic Shrewsbury, who had secluded himself from politics for many years past. Before midsummer the queen had broken finally with her ancient but too domineering confidante. The disappearance of the Duchess of Marlborough from her intimate society was followed by the dismissal first of Sunderland and then of Godolphin. Harley reappeared in the ministry. His own object was in all probability to form



a ministry made up of the moderates of both parties. But there was no real coalescence. By September all Harley's colleagues were Tories, while the House of Commons was the same which had been returned as triumphantly Whig some two years before. A general election was inevitable, and resulted in the return of a strong Tory majority.

## IV

## THE TORY ASCENDENCY

The Barrier Treaty had done the war party no good, since it had encouraged the popular cry that England was pouring out blood and treasure merely to benefit the Dutch; moreover, the extravagant conditions of peace offered to and rejected by Louis could not be reconciled with that desire to bring the war to an honourable close by which every one was professedly actuated. The events of 1710 demonstrated with some clearness that the war was not likely to come to an end at all if Britain insisted on the Whig formula which absolutely refused to recognise the Bourbon king of Spain. The Tory ministers were entirely warranted in conveying to France their readiness to enter upon negotiations with a view to terminating the war. The peace party received a great accession of strength by the death of the Emperor Joseph and the consequent succession of his brother the Archduke Charles to the Austrian dominion and the Imperial Crown. England had not gone into the war in order to revive for Charles VI. the enormous empire of Charles V. A Hapsburg on the Spanish throne had certainly appeared preferable to a Bourbon so long as it was clearly understood that the different Hapsburg crowns were not to be worn by one person; but if the Austrian Emperor, Charles VI., was established also as the head of the Spanish Empire as the result of a great European war ostensibly directed to maintaining the balance of power, the paradox would be somewhat glaring.

Throughout 1711 secret negotiations with France were in progress. There was, in fact, only one way to bring the war to an end—that one of the great Powers should come to terms with France and then insist upon the other Powers accepting those terms. Only by pressure of this kind could they be induced individually to surrender extravagant claims. The war itself was languishing; Marlborough was conscious of the precarious character of his own position in England, since his wife had not only ceased to be the queen's intimate confidante, but had been definitely dismissed. The political managers in England were Harley, the nominal chief of the Tories, and the brilliant St. John, men whose characters and aims were too incompatible for the alliance to last, though they might be considered as each other's complements until they became antagonists. Harley was an opportunist with a dislike for extremes and a preference for



back-stairs methods. St. John was an ambitious adventurer, entirely unscrupulous, and of boundless audacity, who held Harley's cautious and non-committal attitude in contempt, though he was quite ready to assume the same attitude merely as a mask. For him the matter of first-rate importance was to gain a complete ascendancy over the fox-hunting Tory squires whom he despised from the bottom of his soul.

But for both Harley and St. John the first thing was to procure peace and to get rid of Marlborough. The two objects were secured by a *coup d'état* at the end of the year. The way was blocked by the hostile majority in the House of Peers, small but sufficient. The majority was converted into a minority by the innovation of adding twelve Tories to the Peerage, and the transformation of the House of Lords was accompanied by the dismissal of Marlborough and the appointment of Ormonde to the chief military command. The ministers could conduct with a free hand the negotiations which now opened at Utrecht for a general peace, as to the terms of which they had already come to their agreement with France.

The Peace of Utrecht, which was signed in the spring of 1713, was the great achievement of the Tory ministry. In its broad lines it was such a treaty as would have been approved by William III., although the terms obtained by France were infinitely better than those which Louis would have accepted in 1707, 1709, or 1710. It was of little importance that the Emperor chose to prolong the war with France on his own account for some little while before he would surrender his claims. Philip was to retain Spain and the Indies, but he and his house were to be barred from the French succession; the Spanish Netherlands became the Austrian Netherlands, while Holland held the barrier fortresses. Naples and Milan went to Austria; Sicily was handed over as a kingdom to the Duke of Savoy. The gains of Great Britain from the treaty were substantial. She retained Minorca and Gibraltar, bases for the naval command of the Mediterranean. In America she received Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Hudson Bay Territory, all of them hitherto subjects of periodical dispute with France. In the West Indies she acquired the island of St. Christopher. To her was transferred what was called the *Asiento*, restricted rights of trading with the Spanish colonies which had recently been enjoyed by France. This included a monopoly of the supply of negro slaves and the right of sending one trading vessel annually to trade in the South Seas. Further, France undertook to dismantle Dunkirk, formally repudiated the claim of the exiled Stuarts to the Crown of Great Britain, and acknowledged the Hanoverian Succession.

The war, which was originally commenced for sound enough reasons, had been carried on successfully by the Whigs, and the Tories brought it to an end by a peace which came as near to achieving the original aims of the war as could have been hoped for. Great Britain herself had very substantial gains in the American territories and the two new naval bases in the Mediterranean. But while the peace itself might be claimed as satisfactory, two at



least of the attendant circumstances were extremely discreditable to the ministry. Great Britain induced the allies to come to terms by practically deserting them in the field. Ormonde's forces were neutralised by orders from home, while he was still supposed to be acting in concert with the allies. This might perhaps have been excused as being no very great breach of international political morality; but no excuse whatever could be found for the desertion of the Catalonians. The British had directly encouraged Catalonia to rise in arms against the Bourbon monarchy; they were bound in honour to protect the Catalonians against any vindictive treatment. They did nothing of the kind; they made no terms for their Spanish allies, and the rebellious province was left to the tender mercies of the Spanish monarchy.

Probably the Tories did themselves more harm by proposing a commercial treaty with France to accompany the Treaty of Utrecht. In 1704 the Methuen Treaty with Portugal had secured a market for English wool by granting a preference to Portuguese wines, which gave port wine its enormous vogue throughout the eighteenth century. The Methuen Treaty was universally applauded, because the value of the exports to Portugal was much greater than that of the imports; what was called the "balance of trade" was heavily in favour of England, because the difference in values was made up in bullion. A commercial treaty with France, on the other hand, would on the same principles have been in favour of France, where there was no great market for English goods, whereas a lowered tariff would have induced a great demand for French wines and other goods in Britain. Bullion would have gone out of Great Britain into France; so that, according to the theory of the time, a country generally hostile to us would have gained at our expense. The proposal was received with so much indignation that it had to be dropped.

This affair is to be noted as a striking example of the fact that the Whigs were much more determined advocates of the mercantile theory of economics than the Tories. The strength of Toryism lay with the landed interest, and the landed interest had not become protectionist for the simple reason that the country had no difficulty in producing all the corn it wanted for itself. The strength of the Whigs lay among the mercantile classes, and the mercantile classes still believed that their own interests were safeguarded by protection. In the nineteenth century the points of view were reversed; it was the landowners who demanded Protection and the mercantile classes who carried Free Trade.

The Whigs had believed that they could best maintain themselves in power by prolonging the war; the Tories had displaced them by advocating peace on the ground that the war was being continued for the benefit not of Great Britain but of the allies. Hitherto both parties had posed alike as supporters of the Hanoverian Succession. But while the Tory leaders were endeavouring to maintain themselves in power by securing the favour of Queen Anne, the Whig leaders were busy in im-



pressing upon the court of Hanover the conviction that they were the friends of Hanover, and that the Hanoverian Succession was endangered by the Tory ascendancy. The Tories did not grasp the position until it was too late. Before the end of 1713 it was already a moral certainty that, as soon as the Elector of Hanover ascended the British throne, he would place himself in the hands of the Whigs. And the Tories had only just awakened to the fact that the succession question was imminent. Harley, now known as the Earl of Oxford, was not the man to guide the party in an emergency, but he was the man in possession. St. John, who was now Viscount Bolingbroke, found that the time had arrived when he must grasp the leadership. When that was secured, he would have to stake everything on a Stuart Restoration,

though until he held complete control such a policy could not be avowed. The general election which followed the peace had preserved the predominance of his party in Parliament. The matter of vital importance



A hackney coach about 1710.

[From a broadside.]

for him was to get rid of Oxford, and himself to obtain such a dominant influence with the party as would enable him to carry it with him when the moment arrived for throwing off the mask and declaring for King James.

If the game was to be won it would not be by any futile effort to conciliate adverse interests and win over the moderates. The thing could only be effected by an appeal made to popular passion at the right moment, and the Sacheverell incident pointed to a wave of High Church fanaticism as the most promising means to attaining the end in view. To secure the High Churchmen the Schism Act was introduced and carried, which entirely barred dissenters from educational work. It was an obvious first step towards the revival of the Clarendon Code, overthrown by William's Toleration Act, but still dear to the hearts of the High Church Tories. It served its purpose in rallying the whole of that section to the enthusiastic acceptance of Bolingbroke's leadership. Meanwhile he had not only been intriguing with James, but had been steadily employing Mrs. Masham to destroy Oxford's influence with the queen.

On July 27th the intrigues were so far successful that Anne dismissed Oxford, and Bolingbroke had a clear field in forming a new administration. Ready and swift as he was, death was swifter. In three days all the controlling executive offices had been conferred upon Jacobites, secret or avowed ; yet a few days more were needed to make the control effective and enable Bolingbroke openly to throw off the mask. The few days were not given. On the third day after the fall of Oxford the queen had an apoplectic stroke. The Council met, among them the incalculable Shrewsbury. To



them entered two of the great Whig Peers, Somerset and Argyle, to offer their aid in this melancholy emergency. Custom restricted attendance at the Council meetings to the acting ministers of state, but theoretically all members of the Privy Council could claim the right to be present. The arrival of Argyle and Somerset was sufficient proof that the Whigs had concerted their measures for the emergency. Bolingbroke dared not take the tremendous risk of there and then throwing off the mask and declaring against the Hanoverian Succession. Some one, perhaps he himself, proposed that Shrewsbury, who was obviously in collusion with the Whigs, should be made Lord Treasurer ; Bolingbroke at any rate did not venture to resist the proposal. When the physicians reported that the queen had recovered consciousness a deputation was sent to the dying woman's chamber to request her to confer the Treasurer's staff upon Shrewsbury. She acquiesced, handing it to him with the pathetic words, "Use it for the good of my people." A general meeting was immediately called of all the available members of the Privy Council—a very different thing from the selected gathering of Bolingbroke's instruments which had been interrupted by the Whig Peers. The Council acted as a united Government, whose first business was to secure the Hanoverian Succession, and to take measures against any possibility of insurrection or invasion. On the fifth day after Oxford's fall Queen Anne died, and George I. was proclaimed king of England, while no man ventured to raise a dissentient voice.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE WHIGS, AND WALPOLE'S ASCENDENCY

#### I

#### THE HANOVERIAN SUCCESSION

THE Hanoverian Succession confirmed and extended the principles of the Revolution ; it was absolutely irreconcilable not merely with the doctrine of divine right but with any very elevated conception of monarchy. The Revolution itself had been brought about by the determination to put an end to government by a king who had made himself intolerable, and to provide security against a like misgovernment on the part of his successors. A legal justification was required to satisfy the English conscience ; it was found in the doctrine of the Social Contract as expounded by Locke, in the elective character of the early English monarchy, and in the parliamentary title of Henry IV. and Henry VII. But the Revolution had been carried out successfully because Mary and Anne were conspicuously English princesses, and Mary's husband, though a Dutchman and a Calvinist, was still grandson of King Charles the Martyr, and a man indubitably fit to play the part of a king. He was, in fact, the man of whom England stood in need at the moment. But now every living descendant of King Charles was a Romanist, barred from the succession by religion. What Great Britain wanted was not a king but some one to sit on the throne and prevent it from being occupied by a Roman Catholic. The nearest representative of the blood royal who would answer the purpose happened to be a rather elderly German prince whose grandmother had been a daughter of James I.



George I.

[From the painting by Kneller in the National Portrait Gallery.]

Now William had been made king upon conditions, but the conditions



did not make him into a dummy. He was a king in fact as well as in name, because England needed him quite as much as he needed England. Now, however, England needed not George in particular, but merely some colourable imitation of a king to occupy the place of James Stuart. George and his son would have gained nothing by threatening to go back to Hanover. They were kings on condition of good behaviour. Neither their talents nor their characters procured them the respect or affection of their British subjects; if the country was loyal to anything it was not to the person of its kings but to the principles of the Revolution. The Hanoverians had no choice but to place themselves practically without reserve in the hands of the dominant party in Great Britain. Bolingbroke had destroyed the Tory party by identifying it with Jacobitism, and consequently the Whigs held complete control of the situation and retained it for more than fifty years. The comparatively small influence which under such conditions the Crown was able to exercise finally established the supremacy of parliament and the system of party government which was only coming into being during the reigns of William and Mary.

The Whigs had very carefully taught the Elector, and his mother before him, that they could win and hold the Crown of England only by grace of the Whigs and by recognising their dependence on the Whigs. In accordance with the arrangements made for dealing with the situation when Queen Anne should die, the government was vested in the hands of a group of "Lords Justices" nominated by the new king, until he himself should arrive in the country. This was in accordance with the precedents of William's reign, when the king himself had been absent in the Netherlands. The Lords Justices nominated were all Whigs; when George himself came to England in September he appointed all his ministers from that party. They soon showed themselves bent on the entire destruction of the Tories. The dissolution of parliament and a general election returned a strong Whig majority. A commission was appointed to inquire into the proceedings in connection with the Treaty of Utrecht, and on the strength of its report Bolingbroke, Oxford, and Ormonde were all impeached. Bolingbroke had already taken refuge in flight and had joined James Stuart. Ormonde, frightened by the impeachment, promptly followed him. Oxford declined to run away, and was justified by the event. It was too obviously impossible to condemn as treasonable proceedings which had been ratified by the votes of two parliaments as well as by the approval of the monarch who was reigning at the time.

France was pledged by the Treaty of Utrecht to recognise the Hanoverian Succession; but at the deathbed of James II. Louis ignored a similar pledge which he had given at the Peace of Ryswick. France might again repudiate her pledges, and if she supported the claim of James Stuart it was conceivable that a well-organised Jacobite rising might be successful. Common-sense and material interests were on the side of the Hanoverian



Succession ; sentiment was entirely on the other side. But the whole machinery of government was in the hands of men to whom a Stuart restoration would mean political ruin. There were three things absolutely necessary to a successful insurrection—organisation, enthusiasm, and the certainty of extraneous, that is to say French, support. The Jacobites attempted to upset the new dynasty without any one of the three requisites. Unfortunately for them Bolingbroke was the only intelligent person who attempted to direct their counsels, and the unintelligent people carried out their own plans behind his back. Bolingbroke had bent himself to winning over King Louis, but, as in 1714, fate fought against him. Louis was dying; on September 1st, 1715, he died. His sickly great-grandchild Louis XV. became king of France, and the interests of the Orleans regency were entirely opposed to a Stuart restoration.

Nevertheless a few days later the Earl of Mar raised King James's standard in the north of Scotland, where he had collected together a group of Highland chiefs on the pretext of a great hunting. The Government were somewhat unaccountably unprepared. Jacobite sentiment and hatred of the Union were real forces in Scotland capable of effective combination. Prompt and vigorous action on Mar's part might have given him at the outset such an advantage as would have made the insurrection exceedingly formidable. But "Bobbing John," as he was nicknamed, was incapable of promptitude or vigour. While he sat still and did nothing the Duke of Argyle, a soldier and statesman of considerable distinction, was despatched to Scotland to suppress the insurrection. On November 13th the armies of Argyle and Mar met and fought at Sheriffmuir. The battle was characteristic in its futility—

"There's some say that we wan,  
And some say that they wan,  
And some say that none wan at a', man!  
But ae thing I'm sure,  
That at Sheriffmuir  
A battle there was that I saw, man :  
And we ran and they ran,  
And they ran and we ran,  
And we ran and they ran awa', man."

Both the left wings broke and ran ; some ran without any reason, and on the whole the Jacobites ran most effectively. To have called the fight a victory for either party would have been absurd ; some five or six hundred appear to have fallen on either side ; but the practical result was that when the running was over Mar retreated and Argyle did not. The advance of the insurgents was stopped, and all the heart that there ever had been in the rebellion was taken out of it.

When Mar raised the standard of James in the North the English Jacobites ought to have risen simultaneously. But insurrection in the Scottish Highlands was a much simpler matter than in England, where



there were no solid Jacobite districts, and the government troops could be moved with comparative ease and rapidity. The news of the Scottish rising was immediately followed by the arrest of half-a-dozen leading English Jacobites ; and if any hopes of French help had survived the death of Louis XIV. they were quenched by prompt demonstration that the fleet was ready for action. In the north of England, however, a number of Jacobite squires collected together under the leadership of the Earl of Derwentwater and Sir Thomas Forster, who was nominated General. Over the border Lord Kenmure, with Lords Nithsdale, Carnwath, and Wintoun, declared for King James, and were joined by Brigadier M'Intosh with a few Highlanders from Mar's force. These two companies united at Kelso. But the Englishmen would not march North to help Mar against Argyle, and the Highlanders would not march South to strike at the small government force commanded by General Carpenter. While they tried to make up their minds to do something government troops were mustering. At last the insurgents determined to invade Lancashire, whereupon the Highlanders returned home. The rest, some fifteen hundred strong, marched through Cumberland southwards, collecting miscellaneous recruits by the way till they got to Preston. Here they were attacked by Carpenter and Wills. Led with any intelligence they should have been able to rout the government troops ; but after having repulsed on attack their commanders were inveigled or bluffed into surrendering. Sheriffmuir was being fought on the same day.

Thus ignominiously collapsed the rising in England. In Scotland it dragged on a little longer. James himself arrived on the scene with the idea that his presence would give heart to his followers. But the unfortunate prince suffered from an inveterate melancholy which would have damped the most eager enthusiasm. Argyle was in no hurry to strike home ; but the Jacobites had lost the power of striking at all. Their forces diminished day by day, James in despair withdrew from the country, and the once threatening Jacobite conflagration guttered dolefully out.

Most of the leaders escaped to France ; some were attainted. Of the prisoners taken at Preston some who had been army officers were shot. The peers were condemned to be beheaded, and several of the leading commoners to be hanged. But some succeeded in breaking prison, others were respited, and only Kenmure, Derwentwater, and twenty-six commoners were actually put to death. The plain truth was that it was unsafe to proceed to extremities, because too many people would have been inconveniently compromised. Everybody on both sides had friends in the opposite camp, and no one felt quite sure that though it was Hanover's turn to-day it might not be the Stuart's turn to-morrow, and it would be highly impolitic to make the Jacobites vindictive. In not a few families one or two sons had been allowed to join the rising to demonstrate the family's loyalty to the Stuarts, while the head of the house had remained at home to demonstrate its loyalty to the Hanoverian Succession. And



the nation at large sat still, in scarcely disturbed apathy, while the supreme question of the day was settled by two or three thousand regular troops, a rabble of fox-hunters, a few broken adventurers, and some Highland clansmen, most of whom cared more about clan feuds than the real issues that were at stake. A few forfeitures, the construction of some military roads in the Highlands, and an ineffective measure of disarmament, were the principal outcome of the Fifteen.

It produced however one measure of constitutional importance. Under the Triennial Act a general election was due in 1717, and as matters stood it was clearly possible that there might then be a Jacobite majority in parliament. So the Whig House of Commons resolved to prolong its own life, and passed the Septennial Act, which extended the period of parliament from three years to seven—an Act which remained in force until the passing of the Parliament Act in 1911. The Whigs were impervious to the Tory outcry that such a proceeding was unconstitutional. For precedent there was the case of the Long Parliament, which had made its own life legally interminable, except with its own consent. For the rest, the measure was necessary to secure the stability of government.

## II

### THE FRENCH ALLIANCE

The death of Louis XIV. in September 1715 produced what was practically a revolution in international relations. Only one sickly child, Louis XV., stood between Philip V. of Spain and the Crown of France. Philip had abjured all pretensions to that Crown, and if that abjuration held good, the heir of the young Louis was Philip, Duke of Orleans, the son of the second son of Louis XIII. Orleans was declared regent; but there was no escaping the possibility that if Louis died Philip might act upon the legal doctrine that no abjuration of the French Crown could be valid. Hence the regent Orleans, so long as he should be heir-presumptive to the French throne, had the very strongest interest in upholding the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht. The House of Orleans and the House of Hanover were thus mutually bound to support each other; and there followed a period of close alliance between the French and British Governments. Further, this possible succession question created an antagonism between the Spanish Bourbon and the Government of France; for the time being there was no danger to Europe from that menace of Bourbon aggression, which had been conjured up by the old king's acceptance of the Spanish Crown for his grandson.

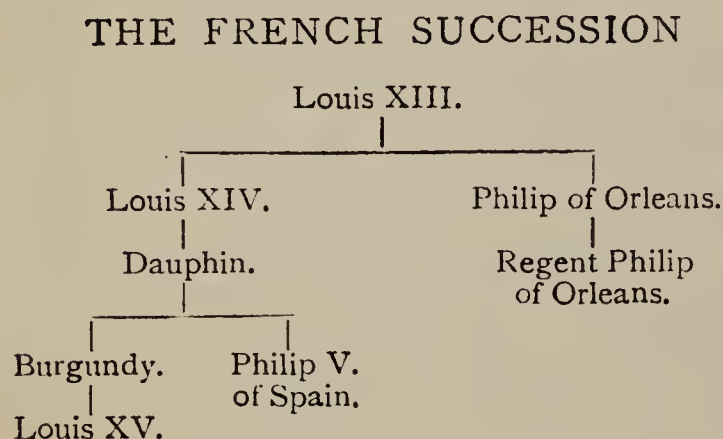
These conditions had a double effect on naval policy. On the one hand, France was satisfied to rely upon the alliance with Great Britain for security against maritime attack, Holland during the late war had already



dropped behind, and the British naval supremacy thus secured was increased by the new combination. On the other hand, the Spanish minister Alberoni was inspired with a passion for reviving the Spanish capacity for maritime rivalry; since, while the British dominated the seas, Spain was cut off from adventures for recovering power in the Italian Peninsula, now mainly absorbed by Austria.

Though the Whigs were in power, the great Whig names of Anne's reign very soon disappeared. Marlborough, at first recalled to a position of confidence, broke down completely at a very early stage; Somers was worn out; Shrewsbury vanished after his appearance as the Whig *deus ex machinâ*. Stanhope and Townshend became the leading counsellors of the

Crown; and with Townshend was presently associated Sir Robert Walpole, whose abilities had already won for him a marked ascendancy in the House of Commons. Of the Junto, Sunderland alone held a leading position. At the beginning of 1717 there was a split between the Whigs, which caused Townshend and Walpole to retire and form a Whig Opposition, which vigorously criticised, and sometimes successfully challenged, the measures of



the Government conducted by Stanhope and Sunderland. The Whig split was almost simultaneous with the development of the understanding between the French and British Governments into the Triple Alliance, in which Holland was included.

Alberoni had at first probably hoped to procure the advancement of Spain by closer relations with England, to be purchased by commercial concessions. Such hopes could not survive the Franco-British Alliance, and he was using his immense capacities for intrigue to work up combinations of the Baltic Powers, which, by threatening Hanover itself and the Hanoverian Succession in England, should prevent the Maritime Power from active intervention in his other designs. Then in 1717 he opened a premature attack upon Sardinia, which had fallen to Austria in the settlement after Utrecht. The discovery and exposure of the intrigues with the Northern Powers spoilt whatever existed in the nature of a plot; France and Great Britain intervened in favour of Austria, and forced the acceptance of an agreement which satisfied neither Austria nor Spain, but which gave Sicily to Austria, and Sardinia in place of it to Savoy. Thus the rulers of Savoy became the kings of Sardinia, the progenitors of the present royal house of Italy.

The check only incited Alberoni to fresh energy. He renewed his secret intrigues, which were intended to bring about an anti-Hanoverian combination between Charles XII. of Sweden and his sometime great enemy the Tsar Peter, the creator of the power of Russia. He strove



harder than ever to build up a mighty Spanish fleet. In France he intrigued with the faction which opposed the Orleans régime. In the summer of 1718 he struck again, launched an expedition against Sicily, and laid siege to Messina. But the British, fully alive to the great preparations which had been in progress, were ready with a strong fleet under command of Admiral Byng in the Mediterranean. Although Spain and Great Britain were not at war, the British fleet went in search of the Spanish fleet. They met off Cape Passaro. The result was entirely decisive. Only ten of the Spaniards escaped annihilation, while only one British ship was seriously damaged. The work was completed by Captain Walton. There is an established fiction, commonly endorsed by historians, that Walton's despatch describing his operations was the briefest on record and ran, "Sir, we have taken and destroyed all the Spanish ships which were on this coast, the number as in the margin." Unfortunately the real despatch is extant, and is ten times as long as the laconic epistle with which the captain has been credited. But though Walton gained an undeserved renown, the fact remained that the battle of Passaro destroyed all prospect of the resuscitation of a Spanish fleet on a scale which could threaten the British supremacy. Nevertheless it was not followed by a declaration of war. Byng's purpose was sufficiently accomplished. Spain could not fight Austria in Sicily and Italy unless she held command of the seas.

Every one of Alberoni's schemes miscarried. The anti-Orleanist plot in France was detected and crushed. Charles XII. of Sweden was killed by a stray shot before Fredricshalle in Norway, and a revolution brought into power in Sweden a government from which Hanover had nothing to fear. A British squadron on the Baltic was an argument which Peter the Great found conclusive. Austria was added to the Triple Alliance, and at the beginning of 1719 the United Powers declared war against Spain. Alberoni made a last desperate attempt to despatch an armada, which went to pieces in the Bay of Biscay before a blow had been struck. A French army entered Spain, and a British squadron wrought havoc at Vigo. Philip realised that the struggle was hopeless, Alberoni was dismissed and banished, and the Spaniards evacuated Sicily. The arrangements proposed in 1717 were generally confirmed. The real root cause of the recent trouble had been the ambitions of Philip's queen, Elizabeth Farnese. The heir to the Spanish throne was Ferdinand, Philip's son by a previous wife, and Elizabeth wanted a separate dominion in Italy for her own offspring. She had now to be content with the recognition of her son Charles as heir to the duchies of Tuscany, Parma, and Piacenza, which were to be definitely separated from the Spanish Crown.

In England the Stanhope administration carried out the traditional Whig policy by repealing the Schism Act and the Occasional Conformity Act which the Tories had at length passed during their period of power in the last years of Queen Anne's reign. Walpole, in Opposition, did not



scruple to criticise the repeal, although no man had more energetically denounced those measures when they were introduced. In other respects, however, the divisions of the party were destined to have beneficial results, and in fact to confirm the Whig domination instead of wrecking it, as at one time they seemed in danger of doing.

The revolution Whigs were not in the slightest degree democrats. They represented in the main two principles, parliamentary supremacy and religious toleration; but the supremacy of parliament did not for them mean popular government. The steady strength of the Whig party lay in the House of Lords; all the more since the addition to their numbers of the Scottish peers and of former Tories who had repudiated all connection with their party to escape the Jacobite taint. A bill was brought in by Sunderland which would have transformed the House of Peers into a permanent oligarchy. The whole number of peers was to be limited to six more than there were at that time. Peerages which lapsed on the failure of male heirs might be replaced. The Crown was to nominate twenty-five Scottish peers, instead of the sixteen whom the body of Scottish peers now elected from their own number. This increase was by way of compensation for the arrangement under the Act of Union by which Scottish peers might be made peers of Great Britain, when they would not longer be included among the sixteen, but would sit in the House each in his own right. The avowed object of the bill was to prevent a repetition of the party move by which the Tories had procured the creation of twelve peers in order to obtain a majority for the passing of a particular measure. But the power to create peers was the only means of preventing a standing majority in the Upper House from exercising a practical sovereignty. A House so constituted could not indeed directly force its own measures through the House of Commons, but its veto would be permanent. It would be a close hereditary body into which no new blood could be introduced except on the actual lapse of a peerage. The commoner could no longer look forward to a peerage as the prize of public service. The Scottish peers could no longer acquire the status of peers of the realm. From Scotland arose a clamour that the bill was a breach of the Treaty of Union, and that if it were carried the Union itself would be challenged. Walpole appealed to the ambitions of the members of the House of Commons, excluded for ever from the prospect of being enrolled among the aristocracy. Sutherland's Peerage Bill was defeated, and the House of Lords remained an open body. In modern times such a defeat would involve the resignation of ministers; but the modern theory was then unknown. Both Walpole and Townshend accepted office under the very ministers whom they had just opposed with all their might, and defeated. The fall of the Stanhope ministry was due to another cause.

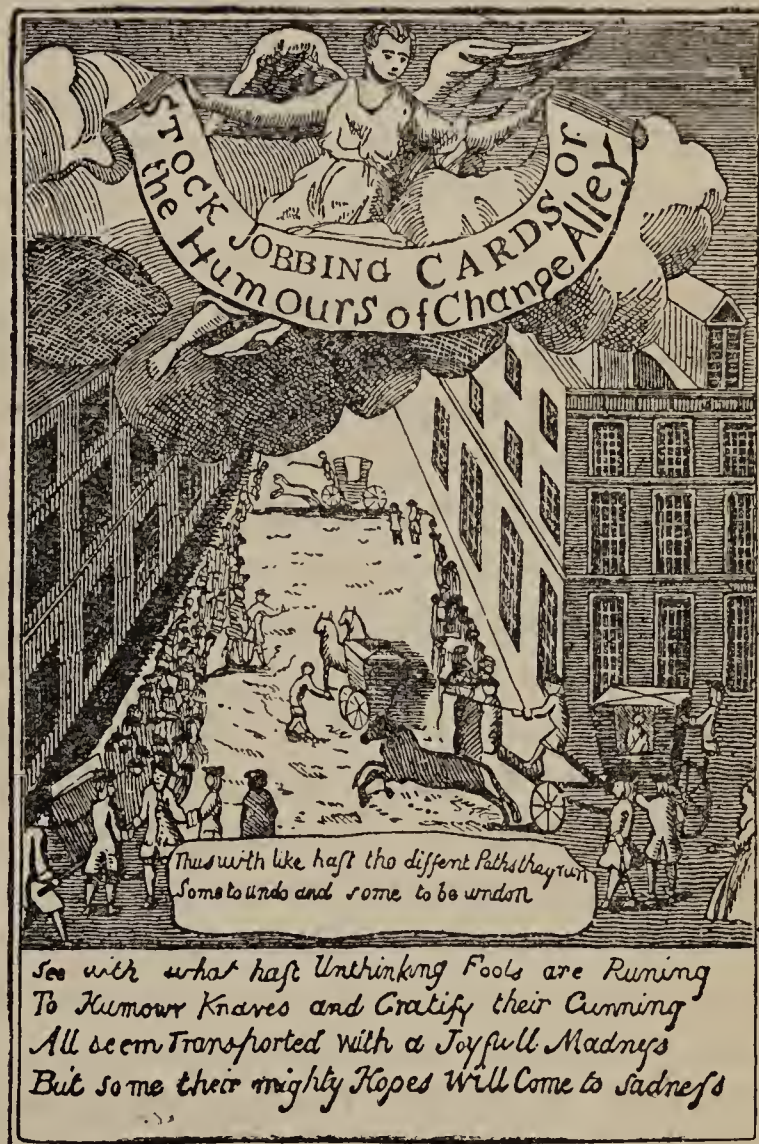
The Whigs under King William had created the great financial corporation of the Bank of England. Of the commercial corporations the greatest was the East India Company, which, originally associated



rather with the Tories, had also become preponderantly Whig since its union with the Second East India Company. The Bank and the East India Company were both extremely useful to the Whigs, while a Tory Government could not with equal confidence rely upon their help. Hence when the Tories came into power in 1710 they created another commercial association in the hope that it would serve them as the other corporations served the Whigs. This was the South Sea Company, with a commercial programme based upon the rights and privileges which were to be the reward of the peace which Harley and St. John at once set about negotiating. It was anticipated that the monopoly of the South Sea trade which was formally opened to England by the Treaty of Utrecht would soon bring immense wealth to the South Sea Company. The company, in return for the monopoly, took over the government debt of ten millions, the government appropriating to it for the payment of interest the proceeds of particular duties.

There was in fact a substantial trade, and the position of the company as originally constituted was reasonably sound. But shortly afterwards Europe was visited by an epidemic of speculative mania. The thing was not confined to England; France went crazy over the fabric of crazy finance erected by Law of Lauriston. Until 1719 the South Sea

Company so far prospered that its shares stood at a premium. Now at the close of the War of the Spanish Succession the National Debt amounted to more than fifty millions, and the annual charges thereon were more than three and a quarter millions. These figures seemed alarming, and there was a very strong desire to reduce the debt as rapidly as possible. But very little had been done in this direction by Walpole's institution of a sinking fund, made just before the Whig split. The South Sea Company now came forward with a proposal to take over another thirty millions of the National Debt, which would be converted into South Sea stock, and to pay seven and a half millions to the government, in return for which their existing privileges in the South Sea trade were to be expanded into an entire monopoly, and the expenses of management entailed by the scheme were to be provided for by the Treasury. Government adopted the scheme in spite



A caricature of the day on the South Sea Company, 1720.



of the open warnings of Walpole; there were members of the ministry who did not go into the matter with clean hands, though others were perfectly honest in their belief in the soundness of the scheme. If it had merely attracted a sufficient supply of additional capital for extended operations the business might have escaped disaster or even have achieved a moderate success. But the public imagination was inflamed by wild rumours of incredible concessions made by Spain, and the huge profits to be anticipated. High and low, rich and poor, were gripped by the gambler's fever, and began to spend every available shilling on South Sea stock. The prices rushed up. On January 31, 1720, while the South Sea Act was under consideration, the market price of £100 of South Sea stock was about £130. A week after the Act was passed two and a quarter millions were subscribed at the price of £300 for a nominal £100 of stock. At the end of May the price had almost reached £1000, and at Midsummer it reached £1060. But in the meanwhile innumerable fraudulent companies had been taking advantage of the gambling frenzy to rob the credulous public, and in the light of the prosecutions which were instituted, the public began to wake up to the fact that it was being robbed. Stockholders of all kinds began to be as eager to sell as they had been to buy, and three months after reaching its highest point the South Sea stock had dropped again to what was after all the highly respectable figure of £150. But the drop meant ruin to the vast numbers who had bought at the inflated prices. Their ruin entailed the ruin also of their creditors, and the creditor's creditors, and so in ever-widening circles the ruin spread. It was easy for the public to attribute the whole hideous disaster to the criminality of directors and the wicked ways of the Government, which had tricked them into believing that the concern was sound. It was easy to forget that the action neither of Government nor of directors had warranted the mad inflation of prices, though there were individual ministers and directors who had used their opportunities to feather their own nests. If Jacobites expressed an unholy glee over a catastrophe which seemed to portend the immediate downfall of the Whigs, they could hardly be blamed; for every one who could be in the most remote degree suspected of having had a share in causing the disaster became the object of frantic popular execration.

But such critics were woefully out in their reckoning. The people turned for their saviour not to the Tories but to the ranks of the Whig Opposition. Townshend, Walpole, those who had joined with them in attacking the men and the measures of the Stanhope-Sunderland administration, were palpably free of all blame. Walpole himself had raised the voice of warning; Walpole was a master of finance. If any man could minimise the disaster it would be Walpole.

Walpole succeeded in his task. He was strong enough to refuse to yield to merely vindictive clamour, and adopt measures which would have appeased the popular rage for the moment at the expense of justice and



without restoring public credit. The company itself was preserved with its nominal shares of £100, once worth £1000, reduced to £33. The private property of directors was confiscated, and provided some two millions for the immediate relief of the sufferers from the catastrophe. The Government's claim on the company for the promised seven millions was cancelled. The South Sea Company remained a going concern. As for the ministry, Ayslabie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was expelled from the House in disgrace. Sunderland was deservedly acquitted, but the bitterness of popular feeling forced him into retirement. Stanhope, conspicuously honest and blameless, might have held his own, but was killed by the shock of the whole affair. Townshend and Walpole became the first ministers of the Crown.

## III

## WALPOLE AND THE SYSTEM

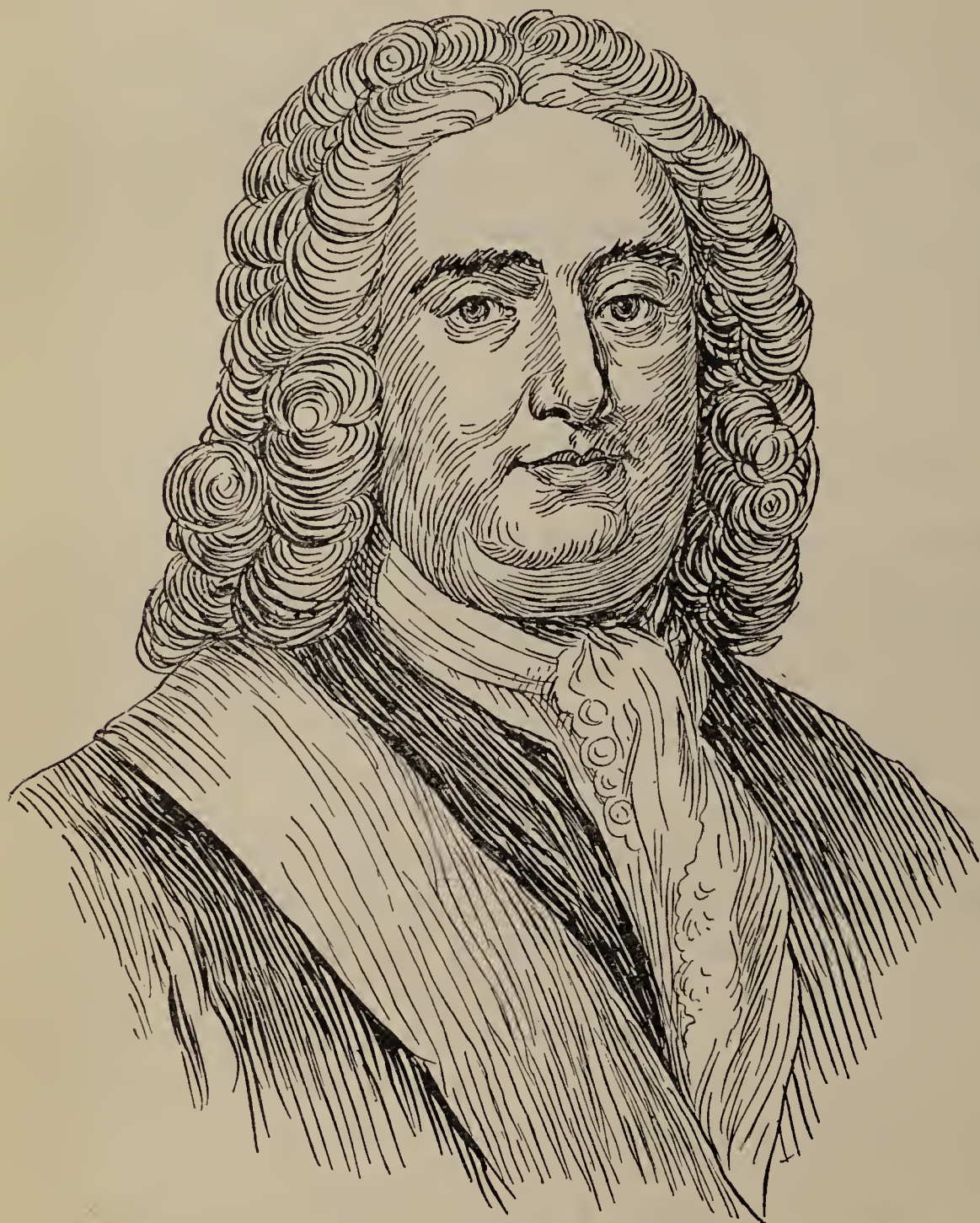
Townshend and Walpole were connected by marriage. They had held together through the political vicissitudes of the last ten years, and for ten years more they remained colleagues. Their government was at first a partnership; but neither was content to be second or merely equal to the other; and the partnership developed into a rivalry which was only brought to an end when Townshend made up his mind in 1730 to leave the field to Walpole, since they could not longer work in harness together. But from the outset Walpole rather than Townshend filled the public eye; for practical purposes Walpole controlled British policy from the end of 1720 until 1739, and he remained nominally at the head of affairs for three years more. This long ministry of Walpole inaugurates the era during which the question of primary importance has been not who was king or queen, but who was Prime Minister? Since the days of Charles I. and Buckingham it had hardly been possible at any time to name any one person as the minister of the Crown who directed the policy of the state. Before the seventeenth century ministers had been still more palpably the servants of the Crown, holding office at the pleasure of the Crown, and dismissed or disgraced or sent to the block if the Crown so pleased. But from Walpole's time onwards the sovereign has been virtually deprived of choice. He has hardly been able to refuse a minister pressed upon him by the leaders of the party dominant in parliament, still less to dismiss one who enjoys parliament's support or to appoint one whom parliament finds obnoxious. And almost at all times one particular minister has been decisively the chief of the administration, though not always the nominal figurehead for whom the title of Prime Minister has come to be reserved.

The change however was gradual and unconscious. William III. chose his own ministers, merely modifying his selection in order to avoid excessive friction in the machinery of government. It was a practical



outcome of the struggle between Crown and parliament that parliament made its voice heard on questions of policy and of administration very much more energetically at the close of the seventeenth century than in the days of Plantagenets or Tudors ; the more or less tacit acquiescence

of parliament was less easily obtained than in earlier times. Hence to avoid friction it had become necessary to secure correspondingly a greater concord between ministerial action and parliamentary opinion. Theoretically it was not necessary for ministers to be in agreement even with each other, but practically it was becoming very inconvenient that it should not be so. If at any time during the reign of William or Anne all the ministers were taken from one political party, it was merely because such a selection seemed necessary at that particular time to prevent a deadlock.



Sir Robert Walpole.

[From the painting by J. B. Vanloo in the National Portrait Gallery.]

The Crown did not as yet recognise, popular opinion did not yet declare, that the power of the Crown to select ministers was restricted, except by the obligation not to choose men who were conspicuously obnoxious. Moreover, the power of the Crown was only slightly restricted even in practice. It is notable that changes of ministry did not usually follow upon general elections. When the Crown and the ministry were in harmony the electors gave a general support to the ministry. When the Duchess of Mariborough thoroughly dominated the queen, Whigs dominated the ministry, and an appeal to the electorate returned a Whig





THE HOUSE OF COMMONS UNDER SIR ROBERT WALPOLE'S ADMINISTRATION

From an engraving of the painting by Hogarth and Thornhill. Walpole stands to the left of Mr. Speaker Onslow.







majority. When the queen shook herself free of the Duchess, Whigs were turned out of office, Tories took their places, and when there was a general election the electors returned a Tory majority. Politicians devoted themselves more zealously to capturing the favour of the sovereign than to cultivating the goodwill of the electorate.

Both the theory and the practice survived the Hanoverian Succession. But the change of dynasty produced new conditions. One of the two great parties was shattered. The interests of the whole body of Whigs were bound up with the security of the new dynasty. The interests of the new dynasty were bound up with the predominance of the Whigs; and the Hanoverian Tories, without hopes of themselves forming a dominant party, were rapidly absorbed into the Whig ranks, more especially after the ignominious collapse of the "Fifteen." The Crown had not the will, and would not have had the power, to choose ministers except from among the Whigs. After the passing of the Septennial Act, Whig government was never really in danger; even the South Sea Bubble confirmed a Whig combination instead of shaking it. Instead of a rivalry of parties, there was only a rivalry of Whig factions; and the long ascendancy of the Whigs under these conditions made it for ever impossible that a working ministry should be formed independent of party lines. Within the party the king apparently retained the power of selection; but the prestige of the Crown was very much reduced by the fact that it was worn by unattractive and unpopular German princes, while the sentiment of loyalty, wherever it survived at all, was necessarily attracted to the legitimate king "over the water."

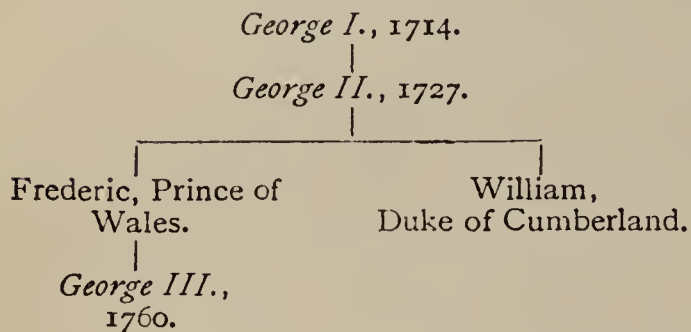
Thus if the king was free to choose any Whig ministers he liked, it still remained necessary that he should choose men who would work together; and the personal influence of the king proved to be no longer sufficient to induce ministers to work in political harmony when they were personally antagonistic to each other. Politicians continued to intrigue in order to obtain royal favour; but the royal favour was wasted on any statesman who could not manage his colleagues or who could not manage parliament. This managing capacity was possessed by Walpole, and after Walpole by Henry Pelham. It was not possessed by their rivals, and therefore between 1720 and 1754 Walpole was for twenty years the inevitable minister and Pelham for ten years. And after Pelham's death government fell into hopeless confusion until there was a coalition between Newcastle and William Pitt. The position of a minister was unstable unless he could secure the royal favour, though the royal favour was not sufficient to keep in power even a brilliant politician who lacked the art of managing his colleagues and parliament.

Walpole, then, ruled the country for nearly nineteen years, and continued nominally at the head of affairs for nearly three years after he had lost the real control. With the exception of Lord Burleigh before him, and the younger Pitt after him, no other minister has held the chief power in the



state for so long a time continuously or almost continuously. He retained the support of the Crown throughout that time, in spite of the fact that George I. and his heir were in constant antagonism, and it was generally expected that the accession of George II. would be followed by a complete

#### THE HANOVERIANS



change of ministers. Walpole maintained his position because he was shrewd enough to know that the person who exercised the strongest influence over the mind of George II. was his very able queen, Caroline of Anspach. Walpole's rivals made the blunder of seeking alliance with the king through other ladies who enjoyed the royal re-

gard. But the latitude of George's morals did not disturb his wife's ascendancy; Walpole allied himself with Queen Caroline, and that alliance secured him with the king. His power was notably diminished when Queen Caroline died in 1737.

Walpole managed his colleagues by overriding them. If they set themselves up as rivals or attempted to defy his authority, they ceased to be his colleagues. At the end of his tenure of power every man of dangerous abilities or overweening ambition had joined the Opposition, an Opposition united only in its antagonism to the minister. Walpole wanted not colleagues but subordinates, and he was strong enough to conduct the government through the mediocre subordinates who obeyed orders.

The management of parliament was more complicated; the method was corruption. Corruption could be applied in one form or another to individual members of parliament, to the magnates who controlled the elections in certain constituencies, and to the electorate itself in other constituencies. County members were returned by the independent votes of landowners, and here direct corruption was hardly available, except so far as it might procure the favourable influence of great county families. Of the boroughs a great number had already become in effect the property of some great magnate whom the voters could not venture to offend. Both Tudors and Stuarts had added to the number of boroughs small



Queen Caroline, Consort of George II.



towns especially in Cornwall, which practically acted under orders from the Crown. In other boroughs of magnitude the parliamentary elections were virtually controlled by the corporation, and corporations were corruptible, even to the extent of openly selling the seat to the highest bidder. Individual members of parliament were corruptible. "All these men have their price," said Walpole as he surveyed the benches of the House of Commons, a remark which has been popularly translated into the saying, "Every man has his price." The price of course was not necessarily cash; but Walpole acted without scruple on the general principle that votes in the House were to be bought, that the support of magnates was to be bought, and that the support of corporations was to be bought. Official places big and small were distributed for the satisfaction of influential persons. Hard cash passed when hard cash was required. Walpole did not create the system; Danby has a better title to the honour of having originated it; as compared with his successors, Walpole was a mere dabbler; still it was he who educated the public conscience into regarding corruption as a matter of course. No man ever bribed Walpole himself; in that sense his hands were conspicuously clean; but he was entirely without shame in his corruption of others. And thus he managed parliament.

But there still remained a latent force which no ministry could withstand if it were roused to activity, the force of public opinion. Ministers have often achieved and not so often retained power by awakening popular enthusiasm. Walpole and his school dreaded popular enthusiasm as a disturbing and unsettling factor. His great object was to prevent ebullitions of sentiment, to preserve an acquiescent apathy in the public, to "let sleeping dogs lie." For more than eighteen years he carried out that policy successfully, though sometimes at the cost of surrendering measures which he regarded as being in themselves for the public good. After eighteen years it was a rush of popular feeling which swept him away, although he would not resign the helm which he could no longer control. During those years his policy had consistently preserved the country at peace, while the storms of war swept over the continent. British commerce expanded under his enlightened financial administration. The nation piled up wealth which was to stand it in good stead. But the pursuit of material wealth as the *summum bonum*, the cultivation of moral indifferentism, the total divorce of politics from all idealism, threatened to debase the national character, until nobler leaders than Walpole reawakened a nobler spirit.



## IV

## THE RULE OF WALPOLE

Lord Hervey, writing memoirs of the earlier years of George II.'s reign, apologises for their lack of incident. There was no lack of incident in affairs on the continent, but Walpole, in spite of occasional strong pressure, managed to prevent Great Britain from being embroiled. It was in fact his very particular business to avoid incidents. The country was to enjoy the happy lot of having no history. Nothing was to be disturbed which could be left undisturbed. The French alliance, inaugurated under the Stanhope régime, was the best possible guarantee of peace. Under Stanhope also the domestic question of religion had been relieved of its acuteness by the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts. In the abstract it was quite unreasonable no doubt that dissent should carry with it any legal disabilities ; but the grievance was more theoretical than practical, since the great majority of Nonconformists had no conscientious objection to passing the very futile tests which the law imposed ; and even if they did break the law, they could practically count upon the passing of an annual Act of Indemnity which relieved them from any penalty. Walpole, therefore, discountenanced any attempts at re-opening a question which might arouse a slumbering fanaticism into a dangerous activity.

For a moment the equilibrium was in danger of being disturbed when old king George I. died in 1727, for it was known that the new king's favourite among the statesman of the day was Carteret, who, at first a colleague of Walpole and Townshend, had been driven from office as a too clever rival. The ice cracked but it did not break ; Walpole, having won the support of Queen Caroline, was soon more firmly established than ever.

The main features of Walpole's policy were negative ; he would not provide a handle for any one who sought to create discontent and disturbance ; he would not be seduced into a policy of intervention in Europe. The one direction in which he adopted a positive policy of reform was in that of commerce ; because he looked to commercial prosperity as the surest guarantee of political quietude. And here he could venture to be a reformer, though an exceedingly cautious one, because his already high financial reputation was convincingly confirmed by his management of the South Sea disaster. The country was wedded to the mercantile system, the doctrine of controlling trade so that British goods should be exchanged for foreign money rather than British money for foreign goods. Broadly speaking, imports were discouraged except from countries which took more than their value in exports, and they were discouraged also as competing



with British products. On the other hand, British exports were taxed in order to keep down their prices in the home market for the benefit of the consumer, although in other cases the consumer was forgotten and the export was encouraged by bounties for the benefit of the producer.

Walpole saw that the greatest economic gain would come from the maximum development of the volume of trade; he wished to make London the great World Emporium. But he was true to his principles, disturbing no interests which were satisfied with the existing order, but might be dangerously excited by change. He reduced or removed taxes on exports, taxes on imports which did not compete with home products, and taxes on raw materials which the home manufacturer wanted to buy at the lowest possible price. Experience had shown the risk and disadvantages which arose from the dependence of the country on the Baltic trade for naval materials, since hostility on the part of the Baltic Powers tended to paralyse that trade; so the production of naval materials at home and in the "Plantations" or colonies was fostered by bounties. No commercial interests suffered, nor did the revenue itself suffer from the reduction of tariffs, because while the rate was lowered the corresponding reduction in price brought an increased demand and an increase in the quantity of the goods on which the duties were levied.

Yet the moment of greatest danger to Walpole's administration came with the financial proposal known as the Excise Bill. If it had not been called an excise bill no danger would have arisen at all. Excise is internal taxation; as distinct from customs duties, the taxation at the ports of goods on their embarkation or disembarkation. It had been introduced by the Commonwealth government, but applied only to the production and sale of spirituous liquors, and was exceedingly unpopular, though it was too useful a source of revenue to be dropped. Now, in accordance with the principle of endeavouring to attract commerce and shipping to English ports, Walpole tried a very successful experiment with tea, coffee, and chocolate. Such goods were brought to English ports, in part, not for sale in England but for re-export. They paid a duty on being disembarked, and when they were re-embarked a corresponding rebate was allowed. In the case of tea, coffee, and chocolate under Walpole's experiment the goods were disembarked and stored at the ports without paying a duty, and of course were re-embarked without any rebate; the duty, in short, became charge-



George II.

[From the portrait by R. E. Pine.]



able only when they were withdrawn from the port for home consumption. It was found that this change was productive of a substantial increase in the revenue. In 1733 Walpole proposed to extend the system to other goods, notably tobacco. But he called the measure an Excise Bill. The purpose of the bill was generally to develop commerce and specifically to obtain an increase of revenue whereby he would be enabled to diminish the land tax, and so to conciliate the interests which bore the main burdens of the nation under the system of finance introduced by the Whigs. But the name of excise spelt ruin to the measure. The Opposition conjured up an appalling picture of a universal system of excise, under which a vast army of government officials would penetrate into private establishments and



Costumes in the early part of the 18th century.

[From Nickoll's "View of Hampden Court."]

would subject the citizen's private affairs to investigation. Even the landowners took fright, preferring the burden of the land tax to the dreaded invasion which was to deprive every Englishman of his most cherished liberties. It was of no use to point out that the new army of officials

would number not much more than a hundred, and that their duties would be practically confined to the ports. The country lost its head almost as completely as in the days of the Popish Plot. Walpole had absolutely no doubt of the value of his proposal; he could have carried it in parliament, but it was evident that it could not be put in execution without much rioting and bloodshed. On such an issue a modern ministry in like circumstances would resign office. Walpole withdrew the measure, but did not resign. Common ministerial responsibility is taken for granted in modern times; but this was still so far from being the case in Walpole's day that some of Walpole's own colleagues took part in the agitation against the bill. Walpole held his own grip of power, and turned those colleagues, Pulteney and Chesterfield, out of office. They joined the ranks of the Opposition which gathered round the inefficient person of Frederick, Prince of Wales, who was on the worst possible terms with his father, as his father had been with George I. The whole episode affords the clearest possible demonstration of the difference between modern conceptions of ministerial responsibility and those which prevailed in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Not domestic but foreign affairs finally led to the destruction of Walpole's influence. We have seen that the outstanding feature of the Whig foreign policy after the death of Louis XIV. was alliance with France, because the peculiar circumstances made the French court under the Regent Orleans antagonistic to the new Bourbon dynasty in Spain, instead



of drawing the two Bourbon powers together. The death of Orleans in 1723 and the domination of the Duke of Bourbon which followed it did not in effect change the situation. For Bourbon wanted to get the young king married and to provide another heir to the throne, in order to exclude the new Duke of Orleans from the succession. But the Spanish princess to whom, with another object in view, the Regent Orleans had betrothed the youthful Louis, was only six years old—Orleans had hoped that the sickly king would die before an heir could be born to him. Precisely in order to prevent this, Bourbon broke the Spanish engagement, and married him to Mary, a daughter of Stanislaus, ex-king of Poland, so that the hostility of Spain to France was intensified by the slight. But then there came a change. Louis in 1726 declared himself of age, dismissed Bourbon, and entrusted the government to the already aged Cardinal Fleury. Fleury, like Walpole, was an advocate of European peace; he believed in achieving his ends by diplomacy in preference to war, and so Fleury and Walpole remained in close alliance. But, on the other hand, Fleury had no reason whatever for antagonism to Spain. Since the king's marriage and the growing improvement in his health, the possibility that Philip of Spain would ever have a chance of asserting a claim to the Crown of France became remote. The unostentatious reconciliation with Spain bore fruit in 1733 in the secret "Family Compact" between the Bourbon powers; and the policy to which that compact pointed was the estrangement of Great Britain from Austria and the European ascendancy of the Bourbons, to be attained by the humiliation first of an isolated Austria and then of an isolated Britain. The scheme so far as France was concerned required the maintenance of friendly relations with Great Britain until Austria had been dealt with; but the friendliness to Great Britain was merely assumed for ulterior purposes. The public knew nothing of these things, but the Family Compact was known to Walpole, and the great defect of Walpole's management of foreign affairs lay in his neglect to take measures either to counteract or to paralyse the Bourbon conspiracy. It was a matter of supreme good fortune for Great Britain that Fleury also neglected to provide the means for carrying out the scheme. Neither Spain nor France developed a navy fit to cope with the naval ascendancy of the island Power, whose supremacy had been so thoroughly established in the last great war and confirmed in the subsequent years.

Fleury's objects were advanced by the War of the Polish Succession which began in 1733 and was ended in 1737. The kingdom of Poland was elective, and all the European Powers ranged themselves on the side of one or other of two opposing candidates for the throne. Great Britain alone kept clear, though King George, as Elector of Hanover, was extremely anxious to plunge into the war in support of the Imperial candidate. The result was that Europe was deluged with blood, and all the treasuries were exhausted, while Britain remained at peace and accumulated wealth. Otherwise, the points in the redistribution of territory to be noted are that the



king of Spain's second son was established as king of the Two Sicilies ; and that Francis, Duke of Lorraine, who was about to marry Maria Theresa, the daughter and heiress of the Emperor, received the dukedom of Tuscany, and in effect surrendered Lorraine itself to France. To the Emperor Charles the main satisfaction was found in the guaranteeing by the Powers of the Pragmatic Sanction, an instrument which, in defiance of precedent, recognised his daughter Maria Theresa as the heiress of the Austrian dominion.

Six years after the Family Compact the whole fabric of Walpole's peace



A satire on Walpole and his Administration about 1738.

[This print, called "In Place," covers the whole political situation of the day.]

policy had melted into thin air. Britain and Spain plunged into war, and in a very short time all Europe was once more in conflagration. But neither the Family Compact nor the intervening War of the Polish Succession was directly responsible for the Anglo-Spanish quarrel or the War of the Austrian Succession. British and Spaniards flew at each other's throats over a quarrel which had been standing for nearly two centuries ; neither people knew anything about Family Compacts. The War of the Austrian Succession arose because the Emperor Charles VI. had neither a son nor a brother, nor even a nephew, and the king of Prussia discovered in the fact an opportunity for rounding off his dominions. Looking back on the circum-



stances in the light of later history, it is easy to observe that the two wars between 1739 and 1763 settled a question of vital importance in the world's history by giving to the British race a decisive supremacy over all European rivals in North America and in India ; but obviously, when the fighting began, the combatants did not realise the nature of the stake. They were not fighting for that stake. The French government *ought* to have been directed by the consciousness that there was not room either in North America or in India for both French and English ; the Bourbon conspiracy *ought* to have been one primarily for the suppression of Great Britain, the appropriation of the Western Hemisphere by the Bourbons, and the establishment of a French Empire in India. The political instinct of the British race *ought* to have led the nation to force the hand of a too timid minister and compel him to strike at Spain before the conspiracy was ripe. But, as a matter of fact, the conspiracy was aimed primarily against Austria, and only in the second place against British maritime supremacy, not consciously against British colonial expansion. The proof lies in the fact that the conspirators made no sort of preparations to challenge the British maritime supremacy in the one conceivably effective manner, namely, by the creation of rival fleets. Neither the French nor the British governments had given a second thought to the idea of dominion in India. And the British nation forced the hand of the British minister, not influenced by an instinctive perception of great imperial necessity, but because it lost its temper. The Englishman who knew of the Family Compact, who was convinced that France would make common cause with Spain, who believed that his country would not be able to stand up against the united Bourbons, was the minister whose hand was forced, the minister who hated and dreaded the war, Robert Walpole.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE FALL OF WALPOLE, AND THE PELHAM ADMINISTRATION

#### I

#### THE WAR IN EUROPE

EVER since the days of Elizabeth English seamen had persisted in a belief that they had a right to trade with the Spanish settlements in Central and South America and in the West Indies, whether the Spanish authorities sanctioned the custom or not. The Spanish authorities did not sanction the custom and punished offenders with a high hand, as they had an obvious right to do. The Treaty of Utrecht had at last made some limited concessions; the British had the right of supplying negro slaves, and of sending one trading ship to the South Seas. But this provided no remedy for the still extensive illicit traffic. On the other hand, the Spaniards were charged with exercising the right of search not only within the proper area of Spanish waters but on the high seas. Both sides broke the law freely. A British captain named Jenkins declared that his ship had been boarded on the high seas and his own ear torn off by the Spanish revenue authorities. When further stories of outrage were multiplied, and, in spite of the conciliatory attitude of British ministers, no redress was forthcoming, the story of Jenkins's ear was resuscitated, a storm of popular indignation swept over the country, and Walpole found himself obliged to choose between declaring war and resigning. He would not resign, and in October 1739 war was declared.

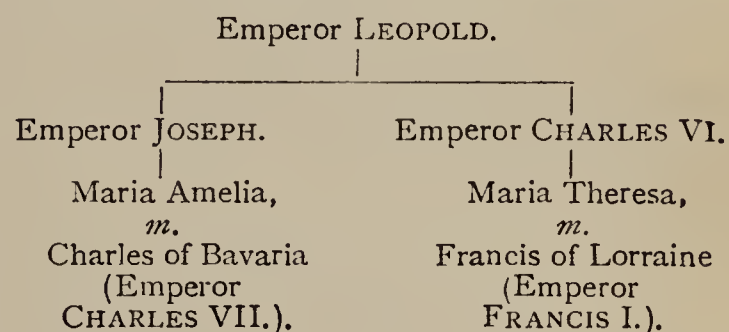
Walpole's inefficiency as an organiser of war was no less conspicuous than his ability as a peace minister. Knowing what he knew, it was his business to have been ready to strike and to strike hard the moment that war was forced upon Britain. The Spanish fleet might and should have been in effect swept off the seas at once. Instead Anson was despatched on the celebrated expedition in the course of which he circumnavigated the globe. Vernon was sent to the West Indies and the Spanish Main, Portobello was severely handled, but both at Cartagena and at St. Iago the British were badly repulsed owing to the discords between the naval and the military authorities. No great result could be looked for from such operations. But before any one else was drawn into taking part in the duel—for France was quite unprepared for a great naval struggle—all



the leading states in Europe found themselves fighting over the Austrian succession.

The Emperor Charles VI. died. According to the Pragmatic Sanction, which every one had guaranteed more or less solemnly, Maria Theresa was to succeed to the whole of the Austrian dominion. Her husband, Francis, formerly of Lorraine, was a candidate for the Imperial Crown. But the Elector of Bavaria claimed the succession to large portions of the dominion, and was also a candidate for the Empire. France and Spain saw their advantage in the dismemberment, Great Britain and Hanover in the integrity, of the Austrian dominion. The electorate of Brandenburg, for some time ranking among the more powerful of the German principalities, had been erected into the kingdom of Prussia at the beginning of the century. Its second king, Frederick William I., had organised his army on the hypothesis that the state was a military machine. The country had not hitherto played the part of a first-rate Power; Frederick II., who had just succeeded his father on the throne, was now to prove the efficacy of that military machine, and set Prussia definitely in the front rank of the European Powers. But to give Prussia that position, it was a strategic necessity for her to absorb the Austrian province of Silesia. While other Powers were arguing and arming, Frederick acted. His troops entered Silesia, for the possession of which he was able to concoct a claim sufficiently plausible for his purposes, and announced that if Maria Theresa confirmed him in possession he would defend the integrity of Austria. If not he would naturally support the claims of Bavaria.

## THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION



The permutations and combinations, and the withdrawals and reappearances of the various states who participated in the war as principals or as auxiliaries were complicated and confusing. The direct issue was between Maria Theresa and Charles of Bavaria, who was successful in the imperial election and became Charles VII. Charles claimed the main succession in right of his wife, the daughter of the Emperor Joseph, the elder brother and predecessor of Charles VI. Since the male succession failed there was a good enough case for arguing that the daughter of the younger brother had no right of precedence over the daughter of the elder brother. Spain intervened in spite of her war with Great Britain, because the opportunity offered of making good her claims to dominions in Italy; Frederick intervened because he wanted to make good his claim in Silesia. Both these were claims against Maria Theresa as the heiress of the Archduke Charles; that is, they were in respect of possessions which had gone to her father as the old Emperor Leopold's second son, not as the senior representative of the Hapsburgs; consequently, from the point of view of



Charles VII. there was no objection. There was in short to be a dismemberment of the dominion of Charles VI. in the interests of Bavaria, Prussia, and Spain.

France tore up her guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction and intervened in the curious character of an auxiliary, because the disintegration of Austria was to the interest of the Bourbons. When the war was fairly opened in Silesia in the spring of 1741, Great Britain, under Walpole's guidance, would not intervene on the continent, and Hanover itself was forced into neutrality by the threat of a French invasion of the Electorate. Saxony joined the Bavarian combination; and if both France and Prussia had acted energetically against Austria Maria Theresa might have been forced into submission. But Frederick held off, after early successes, hoping to make a separate compact of his own with Austria; and France held off because it did not suit her that Charles should have matters all his own way.

At the beginning of 1742 Walpole gave up the hopeless attempt to keep the control of British policy in his own hands. He resigned; in the new ministry foreign affairs were managed by Carteret, whose views coincided with the king's. An energetic foreign policy was adopted; if it had not been so the Opposition would have thundered against the pusillanimity of the government. As it was, they thundered instead against a policy which was controlled by the interests of Hanover. It is to be observed, however, that George always wanted Maria Theresa to purchase the support of Frederick by conceding his demands in Silesia; and Frederick in fact was bought off, after another victory in May, by the Treaty of Breslau, which gave him the better part of the coveted province. But it was not till 1743 that the British and Hanoverian troops played a conspicuous part—at the battle of Dettingen. King George, who commanded in person, blundered into a trap from which the army rescued itself more by sheer valour than by skill. George himself displayed conspicuous courage. This is noted as the last occasion on which a British monarch was himself present on the field of battle.

At this stage some concessions on the part of Maria Theresa would have made possible a general peace, of which George would have had some right to regard himself as the real author. But comparative success made the Austrian queen disinclined for peace; England was irritated against France, which was threatening to take up the cause of the Pretender, and it was easy to proclaim that the peace proposals were dictated in the interests of Hanover. The negotiations fell through, a fresh league was formed for carrying on the war, and in the next year, 1744, Frederick again intervened, having made a compact with France, which now dropped the fiction that her troops were merely acting as auxiliaries and definitely declared war. For hitherto, in spite of all the fighting, Great Britain and France had not nominally been at war with each other.

The character of the contest was modified by the death of Charles VII. in January 1745. The new Elector of Bavaria came to terms with Austria,





The House of Commons in 1742.

[From a drawing by Gravelot engraved by W. J. White.]



and the Austrian queen's husband, Francis of Lorraine, became Emperor. But France was now palpably playing for her own hand, and once more the Netherlands became the theatre of conflict between the French armies under Maurice of Saxony, commonly called Marshal Saxe, an illegitimate son of the Saxon Elector, and the British Hanoverian and Dutch troops under the command of the Duke of Cumberland, the second son of King George. From the British point of view, the most notable event was the defeat of Cumberland at Fontenoy, a battle where the mismanagement of the commander was almost neutralised through the amazing courage and

discipline displayed by the British troops, which were, however, little more admirable than those shown by their foes.

Again, however, the war was modified by the practical withdrawal from it on the continent of one of the combatants on each side. The great Jacobite insurrection called British troops back to England; and Frederick again retired in disgust because France was obviously fighting entirely in her own interest to the complete neglect of his. The French could and did overrun the Netherlands; but then Austria was relieved of another enemy by the accession in Spain of the pacific King Ferdinand, who was much more interested in giving Spain itself a chance of peace and recuperation than in extending the dominions of his half-brothers



The despairing Frenchman at Louisbourg.  
[From a French caricature.]

in Italy or carrying out the ambitions of the Family Compact with France.

In fact, from the time when the Jacobite insurrection was over, and France and Austria had become practically the only active belligerents on the continent, the interest of the struggle for Great Britain is to be found in other regions. She had begun in 1739 with an ill-conducted maritime war against Spain, in which her greatly superior power was frittered away with very little result. In the next stage she had reasserted her maritime ascendancy in the Mediterranean, paralysing the French and Spanish fleets, and thereby at least reducing Spanish activity in Italy. In the closing years of the war naval ascendancy was more vigorously asserted; some blows were struck at the French fleet by Anson and Hawke; and a foretaste was given of the coming struggle with France in North America by the capture of Louisbourg on the St. Lawrence. The fleet would again have turned the scale in favour of the British in the conflict which had opened in India had the general war continued for another year. But by 1748 Britain, Spain, France and Prussia all wanted to stop the



war from which Bavaria had long retired; and a peace on the general basis of a restoration of conquests was forced upon Austria, though Frederick of Prussia retained his acquisitions. Apart from Silesia, Maria Theresa held what she had fought for. England restored Louisbourg to France in exchange for Madras, which the French had captured in India. Frederick of Prussia alone had gained positively by the war, by the actual acquisition of territory and the achievement of a great military reputation; and this had been done at the cost of procuring the undying animosity of Austria. As for Spain and Great Britain, the cause of the quarrel which had started the original duel between them was not even alluded

The Wheel-Borrow Crys of Europe, in 1748-9



European Sovereigns at Market, 1748.

[From a print satirising the re-arrangements, bargainings, and restorations of European diplomacy at the end of the war of the Austrian Succession, in 1748.]

to in the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748), which brought the war to a close.

## II

## THE FORTY-FIVE

The war which lasted from 1739 to 1748 was, from a British point of view, singularly futile and unproductive. But out of it arose, while it was still in progress, two episodes of signal importance. One was the last great effort of Jacobitism, the failure of which finally freed the country from the constantly lurking spectre of civil war. The other was the attempt made by the servants of the French East India Company to eject their British rivals, an attempt which presently recoiled upon their own heads.

The ignominious collapse of the rising of 1715 damped the somewhat lukewarm ardour of English Jacobites. In Scotland the enthusiasm of



loyalty to the Stuarts remained alive among some of the Highland clans, and thrilled the romantic hearts of many ladies. The hope that a Stuart restoration would put an end to the Union with England was cherished north of the Tweed by many who cared nothing for the rights of dynasties. But the real fervour, the real sanguine belief that "James III. and VIII." would yet come by his own, was to be found chiefly among the exiles or the sons of the exiles who had departed from Limerick, or had taken flight after the "Fifteen." The king whose honest bigotry, combined with an obstinate stupidity, lost him the crown of England, was succeeded by the unfortunate prince who lives in the pages of Thackeray as a voluptuary who threw away a crown to gratify an amour. The real James was a meritorious person who habitually endeavoured to do what he believed to be his duty. He would not sacrifice loyalty to his faith for the sake of a crown, though half England would have turned Jacobite if he had turned Protestant. He conceived it to be his duty to regain the crown of his fathers, but, not without plenty of excuse, he was a melancholy pessimist, painfully conscious that he was fighting a losing battle. He was free from the conspicuous faults of his father, of his uncle Charles II., and of his son Charles Edward ; unhappily his personality was not inspiring but chilling. For that reason he was singularly ill-fitted to undertake the rôle which fate had thrust upon him.

Jacobite plots and intrigues continued with varying activity during the thirty years which followed the "Fifteen." Half the English Tories would perhaps have liked to see a restoration ; many Tories and not a few Whigs, while regarding a restoration as a disturbing possibility, were anxious to stand well at the Stuart court if that possibility should materialise. Sanguine exiles were easily persuaded to believe that the Stuart cause was really popular in England, as it in fact was to a large extent in Scotland. Ireland was too powerless to count. But Jacobites in England and Scotland held to a firm conviction that no rising was possible without active military support from beyond the Channel. The long period of the French alliance made any such hopes futile, at least after Alberoni was dismissed from Spain. Hope revived when Britain was again involved in the War of the Austrian Succession. It was encouraged by France, since the British Government was thereby kept in fear of a Jacobite rising. In 1744, when France and Great Britain openly declared war, an invasion for the avowed purpose of effecting a Jacobite restoration was projected. Saxe himself was to have been in command, but at the chosen hour the transports were wrecked ; the moment passed, and the French decided not to divert their arms from the conquest of the Netherlands.

But the fiery enthusiasm and the magnetic personality in which James was wanting were present in his son, Charles Edward, who was five-and-twenty years of age when he played for the great stake and lost. Handsome, athletic, generous, endowed in full measure with that personal charm for which so many members of the Stuart family were conspicuous,



we may, after the event, still trace in him warning signs of those weaknesses which, after the great failure, hurried him to moral ruin ; yet it may be that they would never have developed if his venture had been crowned with success.

The chance of French help was gone ; the prince resolved that at all costs he would strike his blow for the crown. Every trustworthy adherent of his cause warned him that the attempt would be madness, that the English Jacobites would not rise, that the Highland chiefs themselves would not deliberately thrust their necks into a halter. In defiance of all advice the prince sailed from France with seven companions, slipped up the west coast, and landed in Moidart, the south-western corner of Inverness-shire, a remote point, beyond the ken of government officials. Thither he summoned the chiefs in whom he trusted. Some were wise and would not come ; they wished the cause well, but objected to a venture for which they saw no remotest prospect of success. Others came, each one bent on dissuading the prince and declaring that he himself would not be beguiled into an act of sheer madness. They might have held out if Donald Cameron of Lochiel had been able to resist the prince's appeal. But Lochiel gave way. If the prince was bent on ruin Lochiel would stand and fall beside him. Lochiel's action turned the scale ; chief after chief came in. The news filtered through at last to Sir John Cope, the commander of the government forces. Cope marched into the Highlands, intending to throw himself between Charles and the doubtful clans of the North ; Charles slipped past him and marched upon Edinburgh *via* Perth, while the baffled Cope moved to Inverness to bring his forces back to Dunbar by sea. A party of dragoons was sent out from Edinburgh to meet the advancing Highlanders, but fled in a panic without striking a blow—an exhibition



The Jacobite march from the landing at Moidart to the battle of Culloden.



known as the Canter of Colt Brigg. The city of Edinburgh offered no resistance, and in fact welcomed the prince, though the Castle defied him. While Charles held his court at Holyrood, Cope returned from the North and approached Leith. Guided across an intervening marsh on a night march, the Highlanders fell upon the government troops as the morning mists were breaking and scattered them in a discreditable rout at Prestonpans. Scotland was apparently in the hands of the Jacobites.

For five weeks Charles delayed, beguiled by hopes of Jacobite risings and of a possible diversion from France. But while he delayed, the government in London was recalling troops from the Netherlands. The one chance lay in a dash to the South, in demoralising opposition by sheer audacity. Charles flung himself across the border at the head of his six thousand Highlanders, evaded first Wade and then Cumberland by sending each of them off on a false scent, and advanced as far as Derby. London was in a state of complete panic, and it was half believed that the approach of Charles would be the signal for the troops which still barred his advance either to join his standard or to run away. Charles would have dashed on, but less reckless counsels prevailed with the Highland chiefs. No Jacobites had joined them on the march, none had shown signs of rising, no Frenchmen had landed. They were far from their homes; if they advanced the slightest check would involve irretrievable disaster. In bitterness of spirit Charles yielded, and the army turned its face northward. Perhaps there was one chance in a thousand of success if he had advanced. There was no chance at all when once he had begun to retrace his steps. Eight weeks after the Highland army had started from Edinburgh it was back again at Glasgow (December 26). The shrewd management of Duncan Forbes had kept the rest of the clans quiet.

In the rearguard skirmishes which took place during the retreat the government troops had come off badly; Charles now laid siege to Stirling, and at Falkirk a complete defeat was inflicted upon General Hawley, who was in command of the pursuing force, Cumberland having been detained in the South. But this was the last success. Disagreements and jealousies divided the prince's council, the siege of Stirling was abandoned, and the insurgents retired into the Highlands. Thither they were pursued as the spring came on by Cumberland, who maintained his communications with the coast, where a supporting fleet attended his movements. No fresh clans joined the Stuart standard. On April 15th the two forces were in close proximity, the government troops well fed and in good condition, while the Highlanders were on very short rations. Cumberland's army was drawn up on Culloden Moor. Charles attempted to effect a surprise by a night march, but the design was spoilt by delays. Nevertheless the cause was staked on a pitched battle. Under Montrose, under Dundee, under Charles himself, the Highlanders had repeatedly routed larger bodies of regular troops by the fury of their onset. For this Cumberland was prepared, his superior numbers enabling him to draw up his troops in



three lines. The rush of the Highlanders broke the first, but their advance was stopped and turned into a rout by the deadly volleys from the second line. Recovery was hopeless. "The clans of Culloden were scattered in flight," and Cumberland earned his nickname of the Butcher by the savage brutality displayed on the field and in the consequent penal operations. For after Culloden armed resistance was no longer possible, and the prince himself became a fugitive. The Duke merely scoffed at the pacificatory



A contemporary plan of the Battle of Culloden.

wisdom of Forbes. What followed was not war, but a hunt for fugitives. Hairbreadth escapes, splendid deeds of loyalty and devotion, and the glow of romance, give a unique fascination to the story of the Forty-five. As a matter of rational calculation the great adventure was doomed to failure from the very outset, yet chivalry, loyalty, and sheer audacity had actually brought some six thousand clansmen from the wild Highlands of Scotland within measurable distance of winning back the British crown for the house of Stuart.



## III

## DUPLEIX

In 1740 the ambitious Frenchman who in India was at the head of the affairs of the French East India Company was eagerly awaiting the opportunity of a war between Great Britain and France to wipe out the rivalry of the British East India Company. Twenty years later the British East India Company had become no longer a mere body of traders but a territorial power, and French influence had received its *coup de grâce*. The first stage of the conflict corresponds to the period of open war between Great Britain and France, which was brought to a close by the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.

It is not very easy to disabuse our minds of the idea fixed therein by Macaulay that Clive with a handful of Englishmen overthrew the Mogul Empire and set up in its place a British dominion over India. What Clive did perform in actual fact was one of the most astonishing feats recorded in history, but it was an intelligible feat, not a miracle.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the Mogul Empire in India was very distinctly more wanting in the characteristics of a state than the Holy Roman Empire in Europe. During the reign of Henry VIII. the great Babar, a prince of mixed Mongol or Mughal and Turkish race, had burst into India from Afghanistan and founded the Mogul dominion over Hindustan; that is, roughly speaking, the half of India which lies to the north of the river Nerbudda and the mouth of the Ganges. The empire was lost by his son Humayun and again almost recovered; the re-conquest was completed by Humayun's son Akbar, whose glorious rule very nearly synchronises with that of Queen Elizabeth. The rule of Akbar's three successors covers the next hundred years; that is, in effect, the seventeenth century. Under the third, Aurangzib, the great kingdoms of the South which had not been subject to the Moguls were overthrown, and the whole Peninsula from the Himalayas to the sea owned the sovereignty of the "Padishah," who parcelled it out into great vice-royalties or satrapies. But when Aurangzib died in 1707 the control of the empire by the Moguls became merely nominal. The satraps professed allegiance, but acted practically as independent sovereigns. The seat of the Padishah, the Great Mogul, was at Delhi, the traditional capital of the successive Mohammedan dynasties which for centuries had dominated the mainly Hindu populations of Hindustan; but their phantom dominion was made yet more shadowy by the devastating invasion of the Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah, in 1739.

Now we may take India as falling into five divisions—the basin of the Indus and its tributaries forming the Punjab and Sindh; the basin of



the Ganges forming the Delhi province, then Oudh, and then Behar and Bengal; Rajputana extending between the Delhi province and Sindh; Central India with the corresponding portion of the west coast; and the great southern division called the Deccan.<sup>1</sup> The whole of the Deccan was under the sway of the viceroy called the Nizam, with his headquarters at Haidarabad. Subordinate to the Nizam was his lieutenant-governor, the Nawab of the Carnatic, the great province which stretches along the Eastern Sea and inland to the mountains of Mysore. Presently we shall find a Mohammedan adventurer setting up for himself an independent kingdom of Mysore; but not yet. The great central district was dominated by the Hindu confederacy of the Marathas, having five centres, at Puna, Baroda, Indur, Gwalior, and Nagpur. Here and in Rajputana the ruling powers were Hindu; in the Deccan and in the Ganges basin the viceregal dynasties were Mohammedan; the Indus basin was as yet a debatable land where organised government hardly existed. All over India the Mohammedan was to the Hindu an alien conqueror, Turk or Afghan, who had laid his yoke upon the rightful lords of the Indian soil; and the Hindu was to the Mohammedan an infidel and an idolater. In race, in language, and in religion the peoples of India were less homogeneous than the peoples of Europe, although the hybrid Hindostani tongue had grown up in the camps as a common language of general intercourse.

Now, except in Rajputana, there was no single dynasty occupying a throne of importance which had been established for more than about half a century. There were minor Hindu rajahs, whose title may be translated prince or king, who traced their descent to a legendary past; but the Marathas had only sprung into prominence during the rule of Aurangzib, and the nawabs and wazirs, the proconsuls, the governors or lieutenant-governors of great provinces, were the sons or grandsons of Aurangzib's great officers; the aged Nizam had served Aurangzib himself. The Mogul empire was a great congeries of undefined states which had no sense either of a common or of an individual nationality, and no loyalty to a royal house with a traditional title to honour and obedience. Each ruler was watching for a chance of self-aggrandisement, though the will of the Mogul was technically law and every viceroy was technically the Mogul's officer.

On the skirts of this vast country, approximately the size of Europe without Russia and Turkey, were seated a few small communities of European traders. At no great distance from the two British posts, Forts William and St. George, better known afterwards as Calcutta and Madras, were the two main French naval stations of Chandernagur and Pondichery, each with some fortifications, and with a garrison of some scores of white troops; small communities, but each in a sort representative of the might of a great European nation; rivals and competitors in trade, each eager to

<sup>1</sup> See the Map of India on p. 677.



procure for itself from the native powers privileges to be withheld from the other. To the Frenchman, Dupleix, who became governor of Pondichery in 1741, the idea presented itself of acquiring a controlling influence at the courts of the great native potentates, with the corollary that the British rivalry was to be suppressed altogether. The two aims went hand in hand. Neither could be accomplished without the other, each was a means to the other.

The British in India were not indisposed for a duel; but the controlling authorities of the two trading companies at home saw only a loss of trade in any possible hostilities; and neither Dupleix nor his rivals could look for much outside support. Dupleix secured the favour of Anwar-ud-Din, the Nawab of the Carnatic, from whom both the companies held their "factories" as tenants. Anwar-ud-Din (Macaulay's Anaverdy Khan) forbade the British to attack the French when a British squadron appeared in Indian waters. The British squadron went away, but Dupleix concerted his plans with La Bourdonnais, the commandant at the French naval station of Mauritius. In 1746 La Bourdonnais appeared with a squadron and compelled Madras to surrender on terms. Anwar-ud-Din was deaf to the British appeal for protection, because he expected the town when captured to be placed in his own hands. But Dupleix now declared that there was no authority for the terms which La Bourdonnais had granted. He took possession on his own account; though La Bourdonnais retired in anger, feeling that his honour was compromised by the repudiation of his promise.

Then came the critical moment for Dupleix. He refused to resign to Anwar-ud-Din. The Nawab, in wrath, despatched an army of ten thousand men to give the insolent Frenchman a lesson. But Dupleix had mastered the vital truth that a handful of disciplined white troops were a match for ten times their number of half disciplined oriental levies; and further that natives, when drilled, disciplined, and led by European officers, and stiffened by a core of European soldiers, were not much less efficient than European troops in a contest with native armies. Anwar-ud-Din's great force was put to ignominious rout by a small band of Dupleix's sepoys with a few Frenchmen. This startling success at once gave the French a new and tremendous prestige. Anwar-ud-Din, without condescending to be afraid of the French, thought he might make them useful, and came to terms, agreeing to the retention of Madras by Dupleix.

A hundred miles to the south of Madras, beyond Pondichery, the British occupied the fortified post of Fort St. David. The French were in possession of Madras and of numerous British prisoners of war, taken when that town surrendered. The capture of Fort St. David would clear the Carnatic; but the garrison repelled every attack in 1747. In the following summer the attacks were renewed, and were again repulsed by Major Stringer Lawrence, the very capable soldier who had been placed in command. By this time the British naval authorities had awakened to



the benefits that might accrue from a more vigorous employment of naval supremacy. Admiral Boscawen appeared with a squadron in August, and now Pondichery was besieged instead of Fort St. David. After seven weeks, however, during which the defence was brilliantly conducted, and the siege operations were not, Boscawen had to withdraw his fleet because the season of the gales called the monsoon was at hand. During that season the squadron could neither keep the seas nor find adequate harbourage on the coast of the Carnatic. Pondichery escaped. It can hardly be doubted that its fate would have been sealed in the following year by the presence of Boscawen's squadron; but before hostilities were renewed came the news of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle and the order that Madras should be restored to the British.

So closed the first phase of the contest. All the honours had fallen to Dupleix. The only success achieved by the British had been their stubborn defence of Fort St. David. The French, supported by a squadron, had captured Madras. The British, supported by a squadron, had failed to capture Pondichery. Dupleix's small forces had routed the great army of the Nawab of the Carnatic. Madras was restored to the British; but only in consequence of orders from home, not from any military necessity apparent on the spot.

#### IV

#### CLIVE

Peace was signed between Great Britain and France, and direct hostilities between the two companies in India were precluded. But Dupleix was bent on carrying out his own programme. The immense prestige which he had already achieved promised him an overwhelming influence in the native courts of the Deccan; but the British still stood in the way, and were not yet prepared to own themselves beaten. The contest was renewed on different lines, which avoided a formal breach of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Dynastic struggles broke out in the Deccan; French and British took the field as auxiliaries on opposite sides, and the British turned the tables on the French.

Anwar-ud-Din, an old and able soldier, had been appointed Nawab of the Carnatic by the Nizam in 1740. During the thirty years preceding the Nawabship had been held by the able and popular administrator Sadutulla, then by his nephew Dost Ali, and then by Dost Ali's son. The assassination of this last was the cause of the appointment of Anwar-ud-Din. The family of Sadutulla was now represented by an admirable and popular prince named Chanda Sahib. For some years Chanda Sahib had been a captive in the hands of the Marathas. He had been on particularly good terms with the French. Dupleix now ransomed Chanda Sahib from



the Marathas, with the intention of asserting his claims to the Nawabship, to which he, not Anwar-ud-Din, would have been appointed in 1740 had he at that time been at liberty. The powerful old Nizam at Haidarabad would have had to be reckoned with ; but at this opportune moment he died. The succession was seized by his son Nadir Jang, but was claimed by a grandson Muzaffar Jang, on the pretext that he had been appointed to it by the Lord Paramount of all India, the Mogul at Delhi. The two claimants to the Nizamship and the Nawabship, Muzaffar Jang and Chanda Sahib, made common cause against the Nizam and the Nawab in actual possession, Nadir Jang and Anwar-ud-Din.

Dupleix gave the pretenders his active support, on the plea of loyalty to the Mogul. The combined forces marched against Anwar-ud-Din, who was defeated and slain, whereupon his title was taken up by his son Mohammed Ali. The victory had been largely due to the services of a French force under the command of the able General Bussy. Mohammed Ali threw himself into Trichinopoli and appealed to the British for support ; but the latter could do no more than send him some two hundred men. On the other hand, they sent a contingent under Major Lawrence to join Nadir Jang, the *de facto* Nizam, who was now invading the Carnatic in force. But intrigue and conspiracy came to the aid of Dupleix. Nadir Jang was assassinated. Muzaffar Jang was proclaimed Nizam, and when he was killed in a skirmish his place was taken by the French nominee Salabat Jang, who fell completely under the control of Bussy. The new Nizam, accompanied by Bussy, retired to Haidarabad to establish his position, and it appeared that Dupleix had only to crush Mohammed Ali and Trichinopoli to be completely master of the situation, with a decisively controlling influence over both the Nizam of the Deccan and the Nawab of the Carnatic.

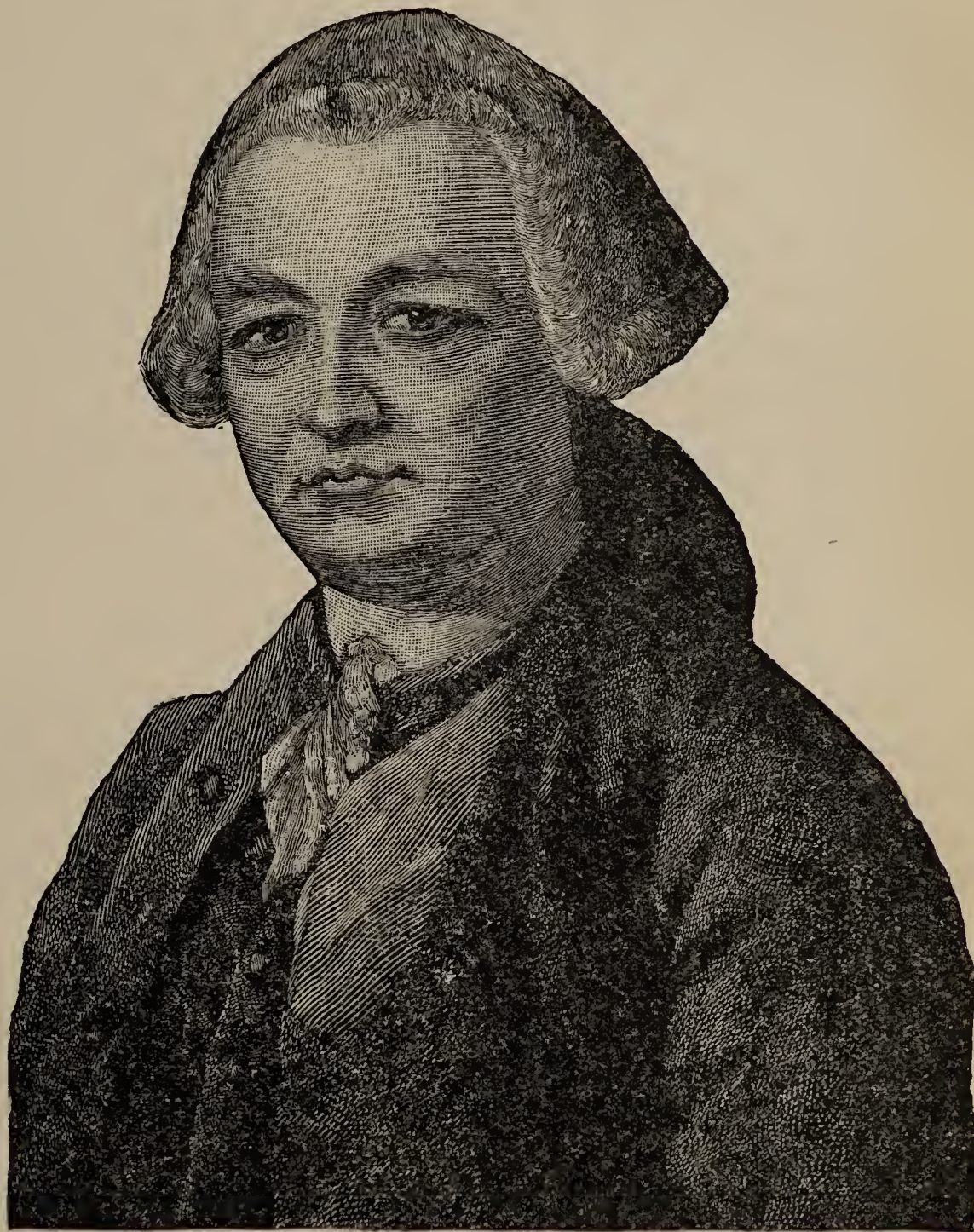
Hitherto there had been a singular absence of vigour and audacity on the part of the Madras authorities. But now there was a new governor, Saunders, and Saunders was able to appreciate the need of activity. He despatched reinforcements to Trichinopoli ; but, what was of still more importance, he listened to young Robert Clive. The story of Clive's youth is as familiar as that of Alfred and the cakes. The naughty boy, with whom his parents could do nothing at home, was sent out to India as a junior clerk or "writer" in the service of the East India Company. When the fighting began the young clerk at once volunteered. He had found his true vocation, and was allowed to exchange his writership for a commission in the company's service.

Trichinopoli was now in imminent danger of falling when Clive proposed to Saunders to create a diversion by attacking Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic. Saunders was bold enough almost to denude Madras of its garrison, by despatching Clive with eight officers, of whom only two had been in action, a couple of hundred British soldiers, and three hundred sepoy, to make the attempt upon Arcot. The blow was secret, sudden as



a thunderbolt. When Clive arrived before Arcot the amazed garrison was seized with panic and fled. Clive took instant possession and prepared to stand a siege. The desired effect was produced. Four thousand men marched from Trichinopoli, gathering reinforcements as they went, till a force of ten thousand men sat down before Arcot with its little garrison of five hundred. For seven weeks Clive held out, defying the efforts of the besiegers, inspiring his own men with the magnificent devotion which led the sepoys to make the spontaneous suggestion that the rice on which they were almost reduced to living should be reserved for the British; the natives could live on the water in which it was boiled.

The fame of the defence spread far and wide; the prestige of the British suddenly rose higher than that of the French. Rajah Sahib, the commander of the besieging force, Chanda Sahib's son, feared that if Arcot did not



Lord Clive in later years.

[From a portrait by Gainsborough about 1773.]

fall at once there would be a great accession of the natives to the British side. On the fiftieth day there was a grand assault. With desperate valour the assault was beaten back. Rajah Sahib raised the siege in despair and began to retreat; Clive's little band sallied forth in pursuit, scattered the great force at Arni, and again, having been joined by a force of Marathas, smote the foe at Kaveripak.

The tide had turned. Major Lawrence, the defender of Fort St. David, was back at Madras after absence on sick leave. Clive and Lawrence together effected the relief of Trichinopoli, outmanœuvred the opposing force, and



compelled it to surrender. Chanda Sahib was murdered, and Mohammed Ali was Nawab of the Carnatic.

Bussy was still dominant at Haidarabad, and the resourceful Dupleix was still by no means beaten. But Dupleix was after all a subordinate; his policy no longer found favour with the authorities in France, and his recall in 1754 was a fatal blow. Dupleix himself would not in the long run have been able to win, because when once Great Britain had become thoroughly alive to the importance of the struggle in India, a new war with France, which was inevitable, would enable her to exercise her sea power with decisive effect. Even apart from sea power the diplomatic talents of Dupleix would hardly have prevailed against the military genius of Clive. But when the actual final struggle came the French had lost Dupleix; and the renewal of war between France and Great Britain had brought into the field the naval power which was not available when the two nations were nominally at peace.

## V

### AFTER THE WAR

The ministry which was in office in England when the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed was that which had been nicknamed the Broad Bottomed Administration on account of its comprehensive character. Walpole had retained office on the outbreak of the war nine years before; but his position became so hopelessly untenable that even he was forced to resign at the beginning of 1742. The nominal chief who succeeded him was Wilmington, while the real head of the government was Carteret. But Carteret was absorbed in the game of European politics which rarely interests, or is understood by, the majority of Englishmen. He ignored the necessity of placating parliament and his own colleagues; his "Hanoverian" measures were easily held up to popular execration; he had no personal party; his position was undermined by the Pelhams, of whom the younger, Henry Pelham, was a master of the arts of conciliation, while the elder, Newcastle, thoroughly understood jobbery, and very little else.

Pelham managed to obtain the support of politicians whom no one else could reconcile; he silenced the most dangerous critics by giving them office, and he clung to Walpole's principle of doing nothing in preference to arousing excited hostility. In fact he regarded it as his business not to carry out any particular policy, but merely to keep the machine running with as little friction as possible.

To the Pelham administration, therefore, fell the important task of the pacification of Scotland after the "Forty-five." The great insurrection had been made possible by the survival in the Highlands of the clan system, the Celtic equivalent of the feudalism which was bred from the contact of



the Roman and the Teuton. As feudalism in Scotland had attained a completer development than in England, owing to the comparative weakness of the central authorities, so feudal law survived in the Scottish Lowlands and gave to the great landowners the Heritable Jurisdictions, legal powers over their tenants which overrode the ordinary law, and sometimes even powers of life and death. But in the Highlands these legal powers were made very much more formidable, because the landowner was the chief of a clan bound to his service and to his obedience by the closest traditional ties of devotion. The Heritable Jurisdiction recognised by the law was merely a partial recognition of the relations between the chief and the clansmen, which were rooted in custom and sentiment, which counted for much more than mere law. The abolition of these jurisdictions which, somewhat in despite of the Act of Union, followed the "Forty-five," put an end to the authority of the chief over his clansman so far as the law was concerned. But it was not after all the most important factor in the change which took place. Some of the chiefs lost their lands by forfeiture, others were driven by impoverishment to sell them; and there were no bonds which linked the clansmen to the new lords of the soil, who were objects not of devotion but of hostility. The clan sentiment was weakened by the abolition of its outward and visible sign when the wearing of the tartan was prohibited. With vigorous disarmament, the improvement of roads, and the establishment of garrisons, it was no longer possible to carry on the old methods of freebooting. The Highlander who suffered what he regarded as an injury could now appeal for redress only to the law, not as in the old time to his own chief as his natural champion. In fact, the law at last penetrated into the Highlands, law with the sanction of physical force too strong for the resistance of the broken-up clan organisation; custom, hitherto more powerful than law, had lost its most vital sanction, loyalty to the chief, and so the strongest barrier which had hitherto kept the Highlanders as a people apart was broken down, and the way was made ready for their gradual amalgamation with the "Saxons."

Another measure followed after an interval of some years, which perhaps in the long run served still more effectively to create a sense of national unity. Not without hesitation on the part of the government, extension was given to an earlier experiment by which a regiment of Highlanders had been raised to form part of the regular army. The Highlanders, with the warrior tradition behind them, found a scope for their martial predilections in the new Highland regiments which were raised. Fighting shoulder to shoulder with Lowland Scots and English, they acquired a sense of comradeship on the one side, and on the other created a respect for their military qualities, which transformed the old hostility into a spirit of generous emulation. Those results were not felt immediately, but they have made their mark in many a stricken field.

Apart from the pacification of Scotland three measures stand to the



credit of the Pelham administration. The first was the creation of the consolidated stock, which ever since has been known as "Consols." The high interest payable on the National Debt was reduced in respect of something over fifty millions to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  and then to 3 per cent., and in the following year, 1751, a group of nine loans was consolidated into 3 per cent. stock. The success of the scheme was a demonstration of the prosperity of the country and of the credit of the government; though this latter must have been in part at least due to the fact that no one was any longer afraid of that possibility of a Stuart restoration, which for fifty years had acted as a deterrent, however slight, to investment in Government Stock. Not only was the reduced interest accepted by the stock-holders, but the stock itself stood at a premium.

The second measure was the reform of the Calendar. A century and a half before, the revised Gregorian Calendar, named after Pope Gregory XIII., began to be adopted in Europe. It was observed that twenty-five leap years in the hundred were one too many, or all but one too many. To bring matters right it was necessary in the first place to cancel some days, and in the second place to omit the century year from the leap years; and in the third place it was held advisable to adopt the popular New Year's Day, January 1, in place of the ecclesiastical New Year's Day, the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25. The reformed Calendar was not adopted in England until 1752, when the eleven days between 2nd and 14th September were dropped; that is to say, 2nd September was the last day reckoned in the old style, the day following it being September 14th new style. From thenceforth also we escape the confusion caused by the uncertainty whether dates upon documents in the first three months of the year followed the old or the new style. For instance, taking January 1 as New Year's Day, Charles I. was beheaded on January 29, 1649 (N.S.). But taking March 25 as New Year's Day, he was beheaded on January 29, 1648 (O.S.). Private practice varied, though officially "old style" was retained, so that it would be impossible to tell except from internal evidence whether a private paper dated January 29, 1649, was dated on the day of the beheading of Charles I. or twelve months afterwards. After 1752 there was no more ambiguity. The carrying of the bill which brought Great Britain into line with nearly all Europe was largely due to Lord Chesterfield, a peer best known to posterity by the volume of *Letters to his Son*, which might be called a *vade mecum* for a young gentleman who was intended to pass through life with perfect manners and no morals. A higher but less remembered title to honour was derived from Lord Chesterfield's brief tenure of the Irish Deputyship, an office in which he distinguished himself by a complete disregard for the corrupting influences which generally at that time controlled the government of Ireland.

The last of Pelham's measures which deserves notice is Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Bill, which abolished in England the opportunities for surreptitious marriages by imposing heavy penalties on any clergy-



man who performed such ceremonies without either the publication of banns or the production of a licence. From this time Gretna Green assumed a romantic prominence as the refuge of young runaway couples ; since once across the Border the fugitives might celebrate their marriage under Scots law. The object of course was to prevent young girls from being enticed into elopements by fortune-hunting adventurers.

Pelham did what he was fit to do. He kept the machine running, not brilliantly, hardly even efficiently, but with a minimum of friction. But in 1754 he died. The storm-clouds were lowering, and Britain had great need of a strong and far-sighted leadership. Such leadership was not to be looked for in the man who succeeded Henry Pelham as the head of the administration, his brother Newcastle.



## CHAPTER XXV

### EMPIRE

#### I

#### THE GROUPING OF THE POWERS

THE storm-clouds were lowering not only for Great Britain but for all Europe. For two conflicts were inevitable. Frederick of Prussia had won for his country a new position among the nations at the cost of the bitter hostility of Austria, and it was quite certain that sooner or later he would have to fight for his life. British and French colonists in America and British and French traders in the East had begun a conflict for dominion which sooner or later would have to be fought out to the bitter end. Whether those two conflicts would be kept separate or would be merged together, and how, in the latter case, the Powers concerned would combine, were the great questions of the hour.

The question at issue in America was plain to view. From Nova Scotia on the north to the border of the Spanish Florida on the south the seaboard and the region inland to the Alleghanies were occupied by some two millions of British colonists, constituted as a number of independent states having no common central government, in most respects autonomous, but all ultimately subject to the control of the Crown and parliament at Westminster. Those two million colonists intended to expand westwards until one day they should reach the Pacific Ocean. But on the north the French occupied the basin of the St. Lawrence with their colony of Canada, and in the south they had planted the colony of Louisiana at the mouth of the Mississippi. The French had carried their exploration along the Mississippi itself and its great tributary the Ohio, which flows from north to south, its sources lying at no great distance from Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, the most easterly of the group of the great lakes out of which the St. Lawrence flows. The French claimed these two river basins ; in other words, the whole belt of territory running from the mouth of the St. Lawrence on the north-east to the mouth of the Mississippi at the south-west. If that claim were admitted the British colonists would be cooped up between the French and the Atlantic ; the French could expand westwards and the British could not. On the other hand, the British claimed the right of free expansion westwards, which in effect would have restricted the French to expansion in the modern Dominion of Canada, leaving them in the



south very little more than the mouth of the Mississippi. There was no possibility of compromising these rival claims ; one or other of the parties would have to be driven off the field.

The number of the French colonists was much less than that of the British ; *primâ facie*, if the two sets of colonists were left to fight the matter out between themselves, the British colonists ought to have been secure of victory. Had they enjoyed a common central government and a standing army there could have been little doubt of the issue. But they were subject to no common direction, and their fighting forces consisted in the separate militias of the separate colonies, organised chiefly for defence against the Redskins, and all having the strongest objection to serving outside the borders of their own particular state. The French in Canada, on the other hand, were under a single directing head ; and the head at this time was a man of genius, both military and administrative, the Marquis de Montcalm. Moreover, a factor in the situation was provided by the Red Indian tribes, who, for the most part, were on better terms with the French than with the British. Hence it is by no means clear that the British would in fact have had the better in a straightforward contest.

But in effect, however inert Great Britain and France might be, however little disposed to give serious attention to colonial questions, it was not possible that they should abstain altogether from intervention in the quarrels of the colonies. It is obvious that if they intervened the effective employment of sea-power would determine the issue precisely as it would determine the issue in India. Both in the west and the east the rivals on the spot were fairly well matched, and the issue, as between them, would turn very largely on the comparative capacity, diplomatic and military, of the leaders on the spot. But in both regions, if one party received energetic support from home and the other party did not, that support would more than counterbalance any local superiority. In both regions it followed that nothing but flagrant mismanagement could deprive the British of ultimate victory, if they made use of their naval ascendancy to prevent the arrival of French reinforcements and to carry reinforcements to their own people.

Now if we turn to Europe, the one thing certain there was that the Austrian government was set on the destruction of Prussia, or at the very least on the recovery of Silesia. And Prussia had at least one other enemy in the Russian Tsarina Elizabeth. By this time both Holland and Sweden had dropped out of the ranks of the Powers which had to be reckoned with as of first-class importance in European complications. But at the beginning of the century Peter the Great had set about the organisation of the vast but incoherent Russian dominion, at least semi-barbaric in its composition, into an empire approximating to Western models. The new Power had not been greatly concerned with the rivalry between Hapsburg and Bourbon, the "balance of power" which loomed so large in the eyes of Western statesmen. Still less was she concerned



with the over-seas rivalry between Great Britain and France, which had not yet been fully realised even at Versailles and Westminster. But she was concerned with the Turks and Poland, and for that reason was touched by the affairs of Austria and of Prussia. Her power was an incalculable quantity, and her intervention might weigh enormously in the scales.

As matters stood in 1748, Prussia and France were in alliance, and Austria and Great Britain were in alliance. Austria and France were traditionally hostile. According to all tradition, therefore, it was to be anticipated either that France and Great Britain would fight out their own duel and stand aloof from the Austro-Prussian quarrel, or that France would support Prussia and England would be on the side of Austria, though in a very half-hearted fashion, since she had no ill-will whatever to Prussia. Austria, on the other hand, could count on the good-will of the Tsarina because of Elizabeth's personal hatred not of the Prussian state but of Frederick himself, since he had been unable to resist the temptation to make sarcastic comments on her morals. Spain would in no case be brought into the embroglio so long as the present King Ferdinand remained on the throne.

At Vienna Maria Theresa had for her minister a clear-sighted statesman, Kaunitz. At Berlin all things were directed by the keenest brain and the readiest hand in Europe. At Versailles there ruled an autocrat who neither had statesmanship himself nor knew how to choose statesmen to help him, a king who was completely under the influence of his mistress, the Pompadour. In London the administration was a mere chaos; the Government was incapable of framing a policy, or of keeping consistently to any definite line. To Kaunitz it appeared that from the Austrian point of view the attitude of England was of less consequence than that of France. France, neutralised or brought into alliance, was worth more than an alliance with the British, who, in the last war, had repeatedly urged Maria Theresa to concede the unwelcome demands of the king of Prussia. France might be amenable because, among other reasons, Frederick had enraged the Pompadour very much as he had enraged the Tsarina. Kaunitz's plan was to combine Austria, Russia, and France for the destruction of Prussia. Saxony too would be drawn into the net, and the Hanoverian connection was more likely to be an embarrassment to Great Britain than a help to Frederick. Kaunitz's diplomacy was effecting a revolution in the system of European alliances. Frederick, preparing for a life and death struggle, preferred a British to a French alliance, because in the last war the French had very obviously neglected his interests to pursue their own ends; and British subsidies, extremely useful to a poor country engaged in a costly war, would at any rate be expended in the manner most useful to Prussia. Great Britain merely drifted, and ultimately found herself in alliance with Prussia and at war with the European coalition, while ministers themselves hardly understood how that position had been arrived at.



In the two years of drifting which passed between the death of Henry Pelham and the outbreak of the war, the one international fact forced to the front was the inevitability of a contest in America. In India affairs quieted down with the recall of Dupleix. Robert Clive was in England, trying to get himself into parliament, while the two companies had agreed to abstain from meddling with the native powers and were at any rate in a state of truce. But in America the Acadian question was acute, since the French and British frontiers had not been defined, and the French population within the unquestionably ceded territory were kept in a state of restless disaffection towards the British government by the French Canada. Moreover, the aggressive policy was in active progress; the French had already set to work to create a chain of forts extending from the great lakes down the line of the Ohio. The British colonists had attempted to force them back, but had the worst of the encounter. In 1754 Benjamin Franklin propounded a scheme for federating the colonies, which would have provided for united action under a common central government; but the spirit of particularism was too strong and the scheme was rejected. It became necessary therefore to appeal to the home government.

The appeal was answered by the despatch to America of a couple of regiments under the command of General Braddock, a valiant veteran who understood the formal methods of fighting practised on the European continent, but knew nothing of backwoods warfare. The French government responded by preparing and despatching reinforcements to Canada, though there was no declaration of war. Nevertheless Admiral Boscawen received orders to cut off the French expedition; this was at the end of April 1755. A second fleet was also being prepared to take the seas under Hawke. At this time the British ministers were still under the impression that what they had to fear was the alliance, not yet formally abrogated, between France and Prussia. George was desperately afraid that Frederick would be moved to attack Hanover, and the Government negotiated both with the Tsarina and with Austria for the protection of Hanover and the Netherlands, in case the colonial struggle between France and Great Britain should issue in an attack on those regions by France and Prussia. The Tsarina had no objection to being subsidised for an attack upon Prussia; but Austria rejected the proposals, which would obviously have destroyed her own private scheme of securing the neutrality if not the actual co-operation of France in an attack upon Prussia itself.

Bad news accumulated. Boscawen failed to intercept the French expedition, and Braddock, marching against the French post of Fort Duquesne, was ambushed and killed, and his force was cut to pieces. The only British success, if success it can be called, was the effective seizure of Acadia by the deportation of the French, commemorated a century later in Longfellow's poem *Evangeline*.

Now the thing that King George and his ministers wanted was to



secure the neutrality of Prussia, the supposed ally of France. To that end they had obtained the convention with Russia, which was to expose Prussia to Russia's immediate attack if she moved against Hanover in the French interest. To this end also the Convention of Westminster was now negotiated with Frederick, directly binding him to neutrality. Frederick had no inclination at all to be dragged into a war for the extension of the French colonial empire, a war in which he could not choose his own time for action, and in which he could by no means count on being effectively defended by France against Russia and Austria, which would quite certainly attack him at their own convenience.

Frederick accepted the convention in January 1756 ; with decisive, but perhaps unexpected, results. When the Tsarina learnt of it she became extremely angry, and Vienna was no longer in doubt that Russia would join actively in the destruction of Prussia. It was decisive moreover for France. Since she could no longer use Prussia as a weapon against Great Britain, she would join Austria and secure herself against Austrian intervention on the side of Great Britain. Besides, the superstitious Louis had an idea that he could compromise with Heaven for his private immoralities by joining a Catholic Power in attacking Protestant states. The old system of alliances and antagonisms was completely broken up, and it had become inevitable that Great Britain and Prussia should stand together in the coming struggle.

The almost unparalleled inefficiency of the British Government would have been absolutely ruinous if it had not been matched by that of France. The destruction of Prussia was no business of France. Her business was to maintain Prussia in Central Europe as a counterpoise to Austria, not to join in the attempt to restore an overwhelming Austrian ascendancy. By allowing herself to be seduced into the Austrian alliance, she was drawn away from devoting her energies whole-heartedly to the duel with England. For the purposes of that duel it was imperative that she should organise her fleets to their highest capacity, while Great Britain's actually very superior sea-power was neutralised by incompetent administration. She would have had nothing to fear from Austrian intervention ; the real question for her was whether the preservation of Prussia called for her own intervention in spite of the British duel. She chose instead to exhaust herself in an attack upon Prussia, from which she could derive no advantage, while its inexpediency was certainly not counterbalanced by any moral considerations. And she neglected her navy until the British administration had been permeated by a new spirit which restored the British fleet to the plenitude of vigour that made its supremacy unassailable.

Not by far-sighted policy, but by drifting along in complete misapprehension of the whole situation, the British Government blundered into the alliance with Prussia ; whereby in effect Great Britain got the help of Prussia and Hanover in fighting France. France suffered more from that combination than she would have suffered from a British alliance with



Austria; but it was not in the least what the British Government had intended. And apart from this, although it was perfectly well known that war with France for the colonies was inevitable, no proper precautions were taken. The garrisons of Minorca and Gibraltar were inadequate; neither Port Mahon nor the Rock was in fit condition to resist a strenuous attack, and the fleet which ought to have been ready to sweep the seas was not made ready at all.

These things were owing to the fact that the Government had no real head, no one to guide it, with clear and definite aims or a clear and definite idea of methods. Newcastle's idea of policy was party management; not the same thing, though a necessary means to it. He was too jealous to co-operate even with the men of ability who were nominally members of his administration. His most formidable critics in the House of Commons were Henry Fox and William Pitt, who both spoke from the government benches, until presently Pitt went out of office, and Fox was silenced as a critic in the House by official advancement and in the Cabinet by the fear of losing his emoluments. The man to whom the people of England turned their eyes was Pitt, whom neither Newcastle nor the king could endure; and Pitt was entirely without the qualities of a party manager, nor would anything induce him to condescend to the business of party management.

## II

### MISMANAGEMENT

In the spring of 1756 the Austrian combination for the destruction of Prussia was not yet avowed; it was not intended that it should be unmasked until all the Powers concerned were ready to strike in concert. But war between France and Great Britain was obviously imminent. The country was on the verge of panic over the expectation of a French invasion; and the ministerial idea of defence was to bring over troops hired from Hanover and Hesse—so little care had been given to the organisation of a fighting force. Pitt's demands for a reorganisation of the militia had been rejected. It was known that a French fleet was on the point of sailing from Toulon, though its destination was uncertain; and Admiral Byng was sent with ten sail of the line to take care of the Mediterranean. By the time that he arrived, in May, a slightly superior French fleet was already engaged in besieging Port Mahon. After an indecisive engagement on May 19th, Byng came to the conclusion that the risks of attempting to raise the siege were too great. He retired to protect Gibraltar, and, at the end of June, Port Mahon surrendered.

The loss of Minorca excited a wild storm of rage in England, where ministers clutched at the chance of diverting some of the indignation from



themselves by making Byng the scapegoat. They did not save themselves. Matters were not improved for them by unsatisfactory news from America. Fox resigned, Newcastle could not face both Pitt and Fox in opposition, and under the Duke of Devonshire a ministry was formed in which Pitt and a group of his connections, Lord Temple, Legge, and George Grenville, found places, by no means to the satisfaction of the king. Byng was court-martialled and ordered to be shot, in accordance with a technical regulation, although the court entirely acquitted him of cowardice, and accompanied the sentence with a protest against the rigour of the law. Public opinion admitted no plea for mercy, though Pitt risked his popularity by advocating the cause of the unlucky admiral; and Byng was shot.

The Devonshire ministry was moved to vigorous action by Pitt. His Militia Bill was passed, the army was increased, a couple of Highland regiments were raised, and a substantial force was despatched to America. Large supplies were voted, including a subsidy for Hanover, although throughout Pitt's career he had clamoured against the subsidising policy. Yet the ministry could not hold its own. Pitt was dismissed at the end of March, chaos supervened, and after a series of abortive attempts to produce a combination which could at once command the confidence of the country and control parliament, George, Newcastle, and Pitt realised that the only possible Government was a coalition between Pitt and Newcastle, in which Pitt had a free hand for action and Newcastle for patronage. The most creditable feature in the not discreditable career of George II. is the loyalty with which he stood by a minister whom he had always detested hitherto, from the moment that he learnt to trust him. Fox, who had been Pitt's most dangerous rival so far as ability was concerned, was quieted by the lucrative post of Paymaster. The formation of the Pitt-Newcastle administration was the beginning of the turning of the tide, which till then had been setting unfavourably enough for Great Britain. Even then some months elapsed before the turn of the tide made itself convincingly felt.

The attack on Minorca had opened the war between Great Britain and France. But Frederick at Berlin was fully aware that his own turn was coming, nor was it his intention to wait until the net had closed round him. He was satisfied that Saxony, which lay in on his southern border, was involved in the combination against him. It was of first-rate importance to him that he should strike before his enemies were ready, and force them to adopt a plan of operations imposed on them by his action, instead of leaving them the initiative and of being himself forced to adapt his own action to their operations. But he could not strike at Austria with Saxony ready to attack his own flank. Frederick never hesitated for his own part to subordinate the niceties of international law to the necessities of the hour. A couple of months after Port Mahon had surrendered to the French the King of Prussia marched into Saxony. If he could paralyse the Electorate, or, still better, if he could induce it to support him, he



designed an immediate invasion of Bohemia and possibly a blow at Prague before the winter set in.

The plan was foiled, because the Saxons offered an unexpected resistance. Their forces concentrated in an impregnable position at Pirna, covering Dresden. Frederick had no alternative but to commence a blockade. An unsuccessful attempt to relieve the Saxons was made by the Austrian Marshal Browne—Scottish and Irish family names are notable among the commanders of continental armies at this period. The Saxons



Map of the Prussian Area of the Seven Years' War, 1756-1763.

were starved into a surrender, Frederick entered Dresden, the Dresden Archives fell into his hands, and he was able to publish the evidence which justified his action. Saxon troops were obliged to serve in the armies of the king of Prussia, and Saxon money helped to supply the Prussian treasury. But the resistance of Pirna had delayed operations too long for Frederick to surprise Bohemia by a sudden blow.

Winter and spring were occupied in preparations and negotiations in which the diplomatic skill of Kaunitz was triumphant. The Treaty of Versailles, signed on May 1, 1757, established the terms of an alliance between Austria, Russia, and France, in which nearly all the advantages



were to go to Austria. Prussia itself was to be partitioned between Austria, Russia, Poland, and Saxony, the Saxon Elector being also king of Poland; in the event only of complete success France was to have her own reward in the Netherlands. On the other hand Hanover, after a vain attempt to get her own territory guaranteed in return for neutrality, was obliged to take part with Prussia and to undertake the defence of the line of the Weser against the anticipated invasion by the French. The command of this force was entrusted to the Duke of Cumberland.

The allies apparently reckoned that Frederick, against so vast a combination, would adopt a purely defensive attitude and confine himself to preparations for resisting attack. But for Frederick at least the true defensive strategy lay in a vigorous offensive. He was overwhelmingly outnumbered; his one chance lay in striking crushing blows which should keep the circle of his enemies perpetually broken; and for carrying out this programme he had the strategical advantage of holding the interior lines. That is, being himself at the centre of a semicircle, he could fling the mass of his troops from one point to another on the circumference much more swiftly than could his foes. But taking the offensive involved enormous risks, and demanded a supreme audacity which lay outside the calculations of strategists who practised warfare on orthodox lines.

The Austrians were startled when suddenly at the beginning of May Frederick flung himself upon Bohemia and shattered their main force before Prague, before a second army could come up to its support and overwhelm him. But when he attempted to repeat the blow against the second Austrian army he met with a crushing defeat at Kolin; he was forced to fall back into Saxony, leaving a column under Bevern to hold the Austrians in check, when they should have recovered from their exertions sufficiently to advance in force. And meanwhile the great French army was advancing to measure swords with Cumberland on the Weser.

This was the position of affairs when the ministerial coalition, headed by Pitt and Newcastle, was formed in England at the end of June. It was not yet known in England that events of vast importance had been taking place in India, and that even at that moment Robert Clive was master of Bengal. It was indeed only quite recently that the public had learnt of the tragedy of the Black Hole of Calcutta in the previous July, for Indian news might take any time from six months to a year to travel. The whole situation looked appallingly black.

Nor were there immediate signs that it would lighten. The Weser was not in fact a defensible river. The great French army got across it unopposed, and proceeded to attack Cumberland at Hastenbeck. A battle was fought which was indecisive. Nevertheless Cumberland, instead of holding his ground, fell back to the north as far as Stade on the Elbe, below Hamburg. There is reason to believe that in so doing he was acting against his own judgment under orders from his father, and that his own wish was to form a junction with Frederick. Whether that be true or not,



his retreat left the way to Prussia through Hanover open. But the Duke of Richelieu, who was now sent to take command of the French army, tarried to plunder the country, which he did very effectively, and then turned in pursuit of Cumberland, who found himself in a *cul de sac* and apparently about to be overwhelmed by a much larger army than his own. Negotiations were opened through the instrumentality of the king of Denmark, and a convention was signed at Kloster Seven on September 10. Under the convention the non-Hanoverian troops under Cumberland's command were to be sent home, while the Hanoverians themselves were to be permitted to remain in winter quarters in the neighbourhood of Stade. In deference to Cumberland's urgency, Richelieu consented to waive the term "capitulation," which implies the act of a commander in the field completely binding in itself, and to call the agreement a "convention," an act which requires ratification by a government.

It did not apparently occur either to Richelieu or to Cumberland that the convention might not be ratified; it was taken as a preliminary to the neutralising of Hanover. Nevertheless the convention was not ratified. Richelieu moved off to occupy the south-western corner of Prussia with a portion of his troops, while the rest were despatched to join the second French army under Soubise, which was on the point of invading Saxony. In England the news of the convention was received with a storm of indignation; its ratification was refused; Cumberland was recalled in disgrace, and refused to defend himself, though he believed himself to have been acting under King George's own orders. At the instance of Pitt Frederick was invited to appoint the Duke of Brunswick's brother, Prince Ferdinand, to the command of the forces in Hanover, while all idea of neutralising George's Electorate was abandoned.

The tale of misfortune was not yet complete. The first fruit of Pitt's accession to power in England was an expedition against Rochefort, on the west coast of France not far from Rochelle. But the General Mor-daunt and the Admiral Hawke disagreed, and the expedition returned at the beginning of October, having accomplished practically nothing. The only good news so far was that in India Clive had captured the French factory at Chandernagur in March, for the conquest of Bengal was still undreamed of. American affairs still went ill. The French under Montcalm had long before cleared the line of forts connecting Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence with the Ohio valley; now they captured Fort William Henry on the south of Lake George. The British commander, Lord Loudoun, relinquished the plan of attempting to capture Louisbourg; and Admiral Holburne, attempting to strike at the French fleet, failed to bring it to action, while his own force suffered so severely in a hurricane that it had to return home.

But although defeat and failure still through the closing months of 1757 seemed to be the order of the day for the British arms, November and December saw two of Frederick's most brilliant triumphs. In October



the great French army under Soubise was preparing to deliver Saxony from its captor. It was always one of Frederick's supreme difficulties that he was precluded from playing a waiting game. It was of the utmost importance to him now to bring Soubise to an engagement and clear him off the field, so that he himself might get back to fight the Austrians. Soubise saw no reason to fight in order to please Frederick, and Frederick could not make a direct attack on him; but a raiding force of Austrians, directed upon Berlin, drew Frederick with his army to the protection of the capital. The Austrians retreated again; but Soubise had been tempted forward by Frederick's withdrawal, and before he could in turn draw back again Frederick forced him to a decisive engagement at Rossbach. Soubise, with an immensely larger force, attempted an enveloping movement; the Prussians fell upon the extended line, broke it, and crumpled it up.

Meanwhile the Austrian main army had entered Silesia in force and was threatening to reduce it. It was fully time for Frederick to hasten back if the whole province was not to be lost. Exactly one month after he had overthrown the French at Rossbach he was facing the Austrians at Leuthen with his victorious army. Even in the interval Bevern had been defeated and taken prisoner, and the very important fortress of Schweidnitz had fallen to the Austrians. At Leuthen, perhaps the most brilliant of all Frederick's brilliant victories, the great Austrian army was shattered as thoroughly as the army of Soubise. By the end of the year Schweidnitz alone was held in Silesia by Frederick's enemies, and Schweidnitz fell in the following spring.

### III

#### PITT

The central object of Pitt's policy was the conquest of America from the French, together with the assertion of an overwhelming naval supremacy. But he was fully aware that the preservation of Prussia was bound up with that policy. America might be conquered, but, if Frederick were crushed by the alliance of Bourbon and Hapsburg, the conquest of America might go for nothing, when that alliance should be directed to crushing an isolated Great Britain. America was to be won in Germany as well as on the high seas and the American continent. But the method was not to be that of Marlborough and William III. We were not to place armies at Frederick's disposal; our own troops were wanted in America, which would draw quite as much fighting energy as could be spared from the development and extension of naval expeditions. Frederick in Europe was to be supported not with British soldiers but with British gold, gold which would maintain Hanoverians, Brunswickers, and other troops under the command of Prince Ferdinand, and would help to preserve Frederick's



own treasury from depletion. It was not without some reluctance that Pitt found himself obliged to strengthen the army in Hanover with some British regiments, when Ferdinand had justified his selection by a victory at Crefeld.

But this was not sufficient. From the Rochefort expedition onwards Pitt planned a series of descents upon the French coast and the French ports. They were in appearance singularly unproductive and even aimless; and they have often been condemned by critical historians. In that condemnation Frederick the Great did not concur. They were a very material contribution to the defence of Prussia. Immense numbers of French troops were kept out of action, out of the French armies which took the field against Prussia, locked up in France because they had to be in perpetual readiness to meet a British attack, at whatever point of the coast it might be delivered. Naval or military experts may differ on the question whether the policy was right or wrong, while the lay student is apt to judge it by the absence of any obvious resultant gain. But it was at any rate a policy approved and commended both in its intentions and in its effects by the greatest military authority of the time, in whose interest it was carried out. It must be regarded as having been in part at least the effective employment of naval supremacy to co-operate with the military forces by a constant diversion of the enemy's troops from their true military objective.

In 1757 Great Britain had achieved no successes; Frederick's victory at Prague had been more than counteracted by his crushing defeat at Kolin, and he had redeemed his position only by the two extraordinarily brilliant performances at Rossbach and Leuthen. But for the inactivity of the Russian armies beyond his eastern frontier—due to an idea that the Tsarina was dying and would be succeeded by a Tsar whose sympathies were entirely with Frederick—Prussia might even have been crushed in that year. In 1758 Frederick was able to open a campaign in Moravia, but in August he found himself obliged to strike at an advancing force of Russians. The hardly won victory of Zorndorf drove them back into Poland; but it was already more than time for Frederick to dash back to Saxony, and then he was actually defeated by the Austrian commander Daun. But Daun rested on his laurels, and again Frederick had to race off to Silesia to give check to another Austrian army and return in time to prevent the dilatory Daun from taking advantage of his temporary absence. Meanwhile Ferdinand of Brunswick had gradually forced the French in the North back across the Rhine and put them to rout at Crefeld. But he was still threatened by a second French army which Soubise had re-formed; and the French prospects were very much improved by the accession to power of the vigorous minister Choiseul, who began to infuse a new life and energy into the war.

Frederick, then, during the year rather more than held his own; but the campaigns illustrate the enormous difficulties of his position. He could



never adopt the tactics of defence, the methods of William of Orange, who never won great victories but always made sure that defeat should not mean disaster. The king of Prussia was always under the necessity of attempting to shatter the particular enemy whom he was for the moment facing. He had no time to follow up a success in one quarter or even to retrieve a defeat ; because, the moment he had struck, he had to hurry at full speed to another quarter to parry another attack. Whenever he was in Silesia the French with recuperated forces were threatening Saxony ; whenever he was in Saxony the Austrians were recuperating themselves and threatening Silesia ; and when both French and Austrians had been temporarily beaten back, the Russians on the north-east were threatening Brandenburg itself. Each of the three allies was generally able to keep in being a couple of armies any one of which immensely outnumbered the largest force which Frederick could collect in any one quarter ; although, happily for him, Ferdinand of Brunswick consistently proved himself able to deal effectively with the northern French army. As we have seen, neither of the French armies attained what should have been its maximum fighting strength because of the forces which were detained elsewhere by fear of British descents on the coasts and ports. One such descent was made upon Cherbourg in August with some success ; stores and guns were captured and fortifications were demolished. But two attacks upon St. Malo in June and September were ineffectual, and the second was attended by a heavy list of casualties.

But British naval predominance was being definitely reasserted ; the news of Clive's apparently miraculous victory at Plassey was an inspiration to deeds of prowess, and affairs in America took a more satisfactory turn. There Pitt planned a vigorous campaign. Loudoun was recalled, and the chief command was given to Amherst, with James Wolfe as his second in command. They, in co-operation with the fleet under Boscawen, were to capture Louisbourg, the great fort on Cape Breton commanding the estuary of the St. Lawrence, and were to proceed thence to the reduction of Quebec. A second force under James Abercrombie, who had been Loudoun's senior subordinate, was to attack the French on the Upper St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain, seizing Ticonderoga as a preliminary to the advance upon Montreal. A third force was to attack Fort Duquesne, not so much because the fort was dangerous in itself as because it symbolised the previous successes of France on the continent. Although Abercrombie mismanaged the attack on Ticonderoga, where his troops were cut up in making a frontal attack upon a very strongly entrenched position, both Fort Duquesne and Louisbourg were captured. Amherst, however, did not feel himself able to attempt the reduction of Quebec before the winter.

The next year, 1759, was the British year of victories and the French year of disasters, while Frederick himself for the first time definitely lost ground, and even for a moment during the course of it lost heart. He



was already becoming too exhausted to do more than watch for the point where he must strike at all costs. Again it was the Russian advance which had to be repelled. In August the Russian force was descending upon Frankfort on the Oder. It was joined by an Austrian contingent before Frederick could strike in and sever the two armies. He attacked the foe at Kunersdorf. The attack was successful, but Frederick attempted with troops already exhausted to improve his victory into the annihilation of the greatly superior force opposed to him; the tables were turned upon him, and his own force barely escaped annihilation.

He was saved from total destruction because neither Russians nor Austrians made any more use of their victory, and because only a few days earlier Ferdinand of Brunswick inflicted a decisive defeat on the French at Minden. The French were rolled back with very heavy loss. The disaster to them would have been even more overwhelming, but for the entirely unaccountable refusal of Lord George Sackville to employ his cavalry in accordance with repeated orders from Prince Ferdinand, conduct which ultimately led to his dismissal from the service. But the victory was admittedly won by the skilful dispositions of Ferdinand and the altogether admirable conduct of the British troops which bore the brunt of the fighting. Particular distinction was won by the Marquis of Granby, who commanded the second British line. His popularity in England, it may be observed in passing, is attested by the number of inns which adopted the gallant warrior's head as a sign. In spite of Lord George Sackville, the battle of Minden redounded to the honour of British arms.

But other glories of the year were exclusively British. Choiseul concentrated his designs on a plan for the invasion of England; nevertheless, so vigorously had the navy been developed that Pitt was able to despatch expeditions to the West Indies, where Guadeloupe was captured, and to the St. Lawrence, to co-operate in the plan of campaign against Canada, without fear that the remainder of the fleet would be insufficient to repel invasion, though another squadron was conveying reinforcements to India. Admiral Rodney bombarded Havre, where a flotilla awaited the embarkation of French troops, though with no very great results.

The two great French naval armaments lay at Toulon and at Brest, while Boscawen kept watch within the Mediterranean, and Hawke's fleet was on guard in Tor Bay. In August La Clue slipped out of Toulon, to join Conflans at Brest, with ten ships of the line and two ships of fifty guns. Boscawen caught them off Lagos Bay on the south of Portugal, and destroyed five of them, while five were blockaded in the harbour of Cadiz.

Hawke's blockade of Brest kept the main French fleet there completely shut up until contrary winds forced the British to shelter in Tor Bay. Conflans started from Brest, intending to pick up and convoy an invading force to Scotland. But Hawke too was released from Tor Bay by the change of wind. Conflans, with twenty-one sail of the line, was in pursuit of a small



squadron of British ships which were cruising in the neighbourhood, when Hawke's fleet hove in sight. A north-westerly wind was rising to a gale, and Conflans ran for Quiberon Bay in the hope that the pursuing British, who had twenty-three ships of the line, would find themselves pounded among the shoals and rocks. Though the gale was developing into a storm, Hawke was not to be baffled. His van overtook the French rear and won a victory not less crushing than that of La Hogue. Five of the French were sunk. Seven, lightened by throwing guns and stores overboard, got over the shallow entrance of the Vilaine, though four of them were completely disabled. Nine escaped to Rochefort or to the Loire; none had the chance of coming out again. The French line of battleships were hopelessly scattered in threes and fours in different ports, where it



General James Wolfe.

was an easy matter to keep them blockaded. The English lost in the fight or in connection with the fight only a couple of ships, which ran upon rocks. The year had added to the British Navy twenty-seven French ships of the line and thirty French frigates. From that time till the end of the war the bulk of the British fleet was available for despatch to any part of the world where it might be wanted; the balance was quite sufficient to prevent any French squadron from taking the sea. The dream of a French invasion was finally disposed of.

The battle of Quiberon Bay was fought on November 20th, two months after the still more celebrated but not more decisive triumph of the British arms in Canada. Not more decisive, because if Wolfe had been beaten on the Heights of Abraham Hawke's destruction of the French fleet would still have enabled the British to pour reinforcements into Canada unchecked, and the French would still have been almost certainly overwhelmed.

Again Pitt's plan of campaign meant an advance in three columns—one directed in the farthest west upon Niagara, the second with the main body under Amherst upon Ticonderoga, while the third, of which Wolfe now held the command, was to proceed up the St. Lawrence against Quebec supported by the squadron under Admiral Sanders. Quebec had received its last small reinforcement from France in May, before the blockade of the French coast was completed. It was intended that the two western forces should converge upon Quebec to join hands with Wolfe; but though they were able to capture Niagara and Ticonderoga, each found difficulties in the way which prevented its further advance.

At the end of June Wolfe, with the Admirals Sanders and Holmes, arrived before Quebec. Quebec stands on the St. Lawrence, on a height



which was accounted impregnable on the western side. On the east the river St. Charles, flowing into the St. Lawrence, was secured at its entrance by a boom; and the greater part of the French army, which outnumbered the British forces, lay entrenched between the St. Charles and the Montmorenci river to the east. Wolfe occupied the southern bank and the north bank east of the Montmorenci. Admiral Holmes, carrying twelve hundred British troops, moved up the river above Quebec, and so gave employment to a French corps of observation. Sanders made any relief of the French from the eastward impossible.

A complete investment of Quebec was out of the question until Amherst should arrive; but there was no sign of Amherst arriving, and if it held out till the winter the St. Lawrence would no longer be navigable, and the ships would have to retire. It was Montcalm's business to stand on the defensive; Wolfe could not force his lines, and the Frenchman was not to be tempted out of his entrenchments. An attack on the French camp failed, Wolfe



Plan of the Capture of Quebec, 1759.

himself became seriously ill, and at the beginning of September his despatches to England were full of the gloomiest forebodings. Two days after the arrival of the most depressing of these letters came an overwhelming revulsion. Quebec had fallen, and Wolfe too had fallen in the hour of victory. He had conceived the desperate design of scaling the Heights of Abraham on the western side of Quebec. Success was possible, if at all, only by effecting a complete surprise; defeat would mean disaster; but Wolfe resolved to take the risk. On December 12th Holmes moved up the river, threatening an attack from a higher point and drawing off the French detachment of Bougainville, whose task it was to prevent a landing on that side. A heavy bombardment of the French camp on the east was opened by Admiral Sanders as the prelude to a grand attack in that quarter. Both movements were feints, intended to withdraw the attention of the French from the real point of attack. Wolfe, in the night, with four thousand men in boats, dropped down the river to the point chosen; he had shifted camp to facilitate embarkation above Quebec. No sentries were on guard at the foot of the precipitous height which the force scaled undetected; the leaders surprised and caught the small guard at the top. By daybreak



something over three thousand men were beginning to be formed in order of battle. Montcalm's forces were rapidly brought up ; how much they outnumbered the British is not known. At about nine o'clock the French swept forward to drive the English over the cliff ; the British reserved their fire till the enemy were thirty yards off. At the first deadly volley the French checked and reeled ; at the second they broke and fled, while the British charged with the bayonet, and were stopped only by the fire of the artillery from the town walls. Montcalm had received his death wound ; but Wolfe himself "died happy" on the field. The victorious British entrenched themselves in the position they had won, and four days later Quebec capitulated.

During 1760 the main feature of the war was the completion of the conquest of Canada, together with the final blow dealt to the collapsing French power in India at the battle of Wandewash. Frederick throughout the year was in great straits. Prussia was almost drained of fighting material ; all Prince Ferdinand's skill and all his men were required to hold back the still very much larger force which the French were able to put in the field. Already at the close of 1759 the coalition had made good their footing in Saxony, and were in possession of Dresden. But for the British subsidies it would have been impossible to maintain in the field armies which could now only be scraped together with the utmost difficulty. Frederick could indeed hardly have been saved but for the incomparable sluggishness of the Austrian Daun and the stolid immobility of the Russians. Thus aided he was enabled in the autumn to defeat Laudon at Liegnitz, and then Daun himself at Torgau, while the Russians did nothing. But Frederick's victories were no longer shattering blows ; they were reverses for his enemies, not disasters ; and before the year was over his prospects were seriously affected by the death of George II., and the accession to the British throne of a young king who was determined to rid himself of Pitt's ascendancy.

To Pitt's loyalty Frederick owed it that he was not left to his fate. For during the first month of the year Choiseul was doing his best to induce Pitt to enter on a separate negotiation. But in the first place nothing would induce Pitt to desert his ally ; and in the second he was fully satisfied that in spite of his own enormous war expenditure, the strain on France was much more severe, that she was becoming thoroughly exhausted, and that the longer the war went on the more completely she would be prostrated. He was undeterred by the suspicion already awakening in his mind that Spain under a new king might join the coalition. For the pacific Ferdinand was dead and had been succeeded by his half-brother, Charles IV., who had resigned the throne of Naples to occupy that of Spain. Choiseul's negotiations with Britain were therefore fruitless.

Those negotiations, though they led to a temporary suspension of hostilities in the western theatre of the war in Europe, did not check the progress of events in Canada. The British now held Quebec, under





“ A VIEW OF THE TAKING OF QUEBEC, SEPTEMBER 13TH, 1759 ”

From a print published in the same year.







command of General Murray, as well as Louisbourg. Amherst was again setting forward his converging movement on the west. The French sought to strike the first blow by attacking Quebec, where the garrison could not obtain the support of a British squadron until the St. Lawrence became navigable again. For this purpose they were able to despatch a force which was double that under Murray's command; and at the end of April the British, after a sharp encounter at Sainte Foy, were driven within the walls of Quebec. But ten days later came the news that a British squadron was now making its way up the St. Lawrence, and the French retreated. All that was left for them was the attempt to maintain themselves at Montreal; but Murray was free to take his own share in the converging movement, advancing from Quebec. The three British columns united before Montreal on September 7th, and the next day the town capitulated. The whole Canadian dominion was surrendered to the British Crown under a guarantee that property was not to be disturbed and that religious liberty was to be secured, while the French troops with their officers laid down their arms and were sent back to France under promise of not again serving during the war.

The crisis of the struggle was over. In America and India the French had been beaten out of the field as rivals of the British, and the supremacy of the British race was assured. More than two years were to pass before peace was signed, a peace which in effect confirmed, as far as the British Empire was concerned, the position which had already been won when the old king died in October 1760. The reign of Pitt practically ended with the reign of George II. The control was taken from his hands, and the last phase of the war forms the first phase of new political and international conditions. It remains in this chapter to complete the story of the establishment of the British power in the East.

#### IV

#### BENGAL

In 1754 the two leading actors in the Anglo-French struggle in India were withdrawn from the scene—Dupleix to suffer from shameful ill-treatment at the hands of his countrymen, the victor of Arcot to seek parliamentary honours, which, happily, he failed to obtain. The strife had been restricted to the Carnatic; and the British and French governors in that province came to an amicable agreement that they would leave native politics alone and fight no more. Still it was anticipated that when France and Britain went to war again there would be some difficulty in preserving the peace in India. In 1756 Clive was returning to the East, and there was a small British squadron in Indian waters under the command of Admiral Watson. In conjunction with the admiral, Clive destroyed a pirate's



stronghold at Gheriah on the west coast and then proceeded to take up his command at Fort St. David. No active steps against the French were possible under the existing agreement, and it must be noted that the declaration of war between England and France was not known in India until early in 1757.

But in August there came to Madras the news of a ghastly tragedy at Calcutta.

The events in the Carnatic had attracted little attention in Hindustan. The Mogul reigned at Delhi, but in effect the whole north-west was dominated by Ahmed Shah, the master of Kabul. From Central India the Western Marathas had pushed their power up to the banks of the Jumna, the river on which stand the Mogul cities of Delhi and Agra. The whole Maratha confederacy recognised as its head the hereditary Peishwa, a sort of mayor of the palace, who was nominally the minister of the royal house of the Marathas. The peishwa's headquarters were at Puna. The chief of the Eastern Marathas was the Bhonsla, the Rajah of Berar or Nagpur, which is as nearly as possible the central point of the Peninsula; and the eastern Marathas raided the Ganges provinces as far down the river as Calcutta itself. Between Ahmed Shah on the north-west and the Marathas on the south the Mogul was practically without power at all, and the two nawabs of the great Ganges provinces, of which the upper was Oudh and the lower Bengal with Behar, had made themselves independent princes. The Nawab of Oudh, however, claimed the title of Wazir or Chief Minister of the Mogul.



Suraj ud-Daulah,  
Nawab of Bengal.

[From a painting of the  
Nawab and his sons,  
by Kettle.]

Now at the beginning of 1756 Ali Vardi Khan, the old experienced Nawab of Bengal, died, and was succeeded by his grandson Suraj ud-Daulah, a half mad youth of nineteen, full of an inordinate vanity and a lust for blood, very much like the Roman Emperor Caligula. Suraj ud-Daulah, possibly at the instigation of the French, chose to take offence because the British at Fort William were strengthening their fortifications in case they should find themselves involved in hostilities with their French neighbours at Chandernagur. The nawab ordered them to demolish their fortifications, the governor replied with a remonstrance; and the nawab responded by despatching an army to Calcutta. The governor and some others fled on some British ships which were in the Hugli; those who remained behind had no choice but to surrender. The unhappy prisoners, one hundred and forty-six in number, were packed into a chamber twenty feet square, three human beings to the square yard, with one small grating to let in air, on a sultry July night in Calcutta. Then Suraj ud-Daulah forgot them till next morning, when twenty-three of the hundred and forty six were found to be still alive. Such was the tragedy of the Black Hole.



One course only was possible for the British in Madras. At whatever cost the perpetrator of so ghastly an outrage must be punished. Clive, with the company's forces and Watson's naval squadron of ten ships, were despatched to the Hugli. In the first week of January Clive had stormed and captured the forts of Baj-Baj and Hugli, and had driven the nawab's troops out of Calcutta. The nawab, who was beginning to discover that traders were more use to him alive than dead, was surprised to find that the British could fight as well as trade. He had collected an army to wipe them out, but that army in turn was scattered ; he began to treat.

But while he was making promises to Clive of restitution and compensation, he was secretly imploring the French at Chandernagur, and even Bussy at Haidarabad, to come to his aid. The way was cleared for Clive by news of the declaration of war between France and Great Britain. He gave no time for a combination to be formed against the British, but at once struck at Chandernagur, which fell on March 23rd. All the military stores and five hundred prisoners of war fell into his hands. That settled the question of French intervention in Bengal, and decided Bussy to confine his activities to the south. The question now was whether Clive had done enough for British honour and should return to the south, where the Carnatic was threatened with a French war. If he did so, Calcutta would be left defenceless, and there was every probability that Suraj ud-Daulah, free from the immediate terror inspired by the presence of the British forces, was sufficiently insane to seek revenge.

The call to remain in Bengal came from the natives themselves. The nawab's rule was a reign of terror ; his principal ministers resolved to get rid of him, and to set on the throne Mir Jafar, the commander-in-chief of his army. They applied to Clive to assist them. Mir Jafar as nawab of Bengal, established there by aid of the British, would be a puppet of the British as completely as the nawab of Arcot. Clive and the Calcutta Council entertained the proposal. While they amused Suraj ud-Daulah with empty negotiations, terms were arranged with the conspirators through their Hindu agent, Amin Chand. In the course of the negotiations with the conspirators Clive, with the support of the Council, committed the one act of his public career which is seriously open to censure. When all was ready except the formal completion of the agreements, Amin Chand (or Omichund, as Macaulay calls him) demanded the insertion in the treaty of a clause engaging to pay him £300,000. Every detail of the plot was known to him, and would be betrayed to Suraj ud-Daulah if his demand were refused. He was tricked by a fraud such as he might have invented himself. Two copies of the treaty were drawn up, one upon red paper, containing the required promise which was omitted from the other. He was satisfied when he was shown the red treaty with the British signatures attached to it. He did not know that one of the signatures was a forgery. Admiral Watson had refused to append his name, though, when the thing was done, he became a party to it. But it was the other treaty without



the blackmailing clause which was signed by the conspirators. Clive to the day of his death asserted that he was justified; but on no other occasion did he depart from the one sound rule for Europeans in dealing with Orientals, of holding fast not by the Eastern but by the Western standard of morals. For no Oriental would have been shocked by the deception practised upon Amin Chand.

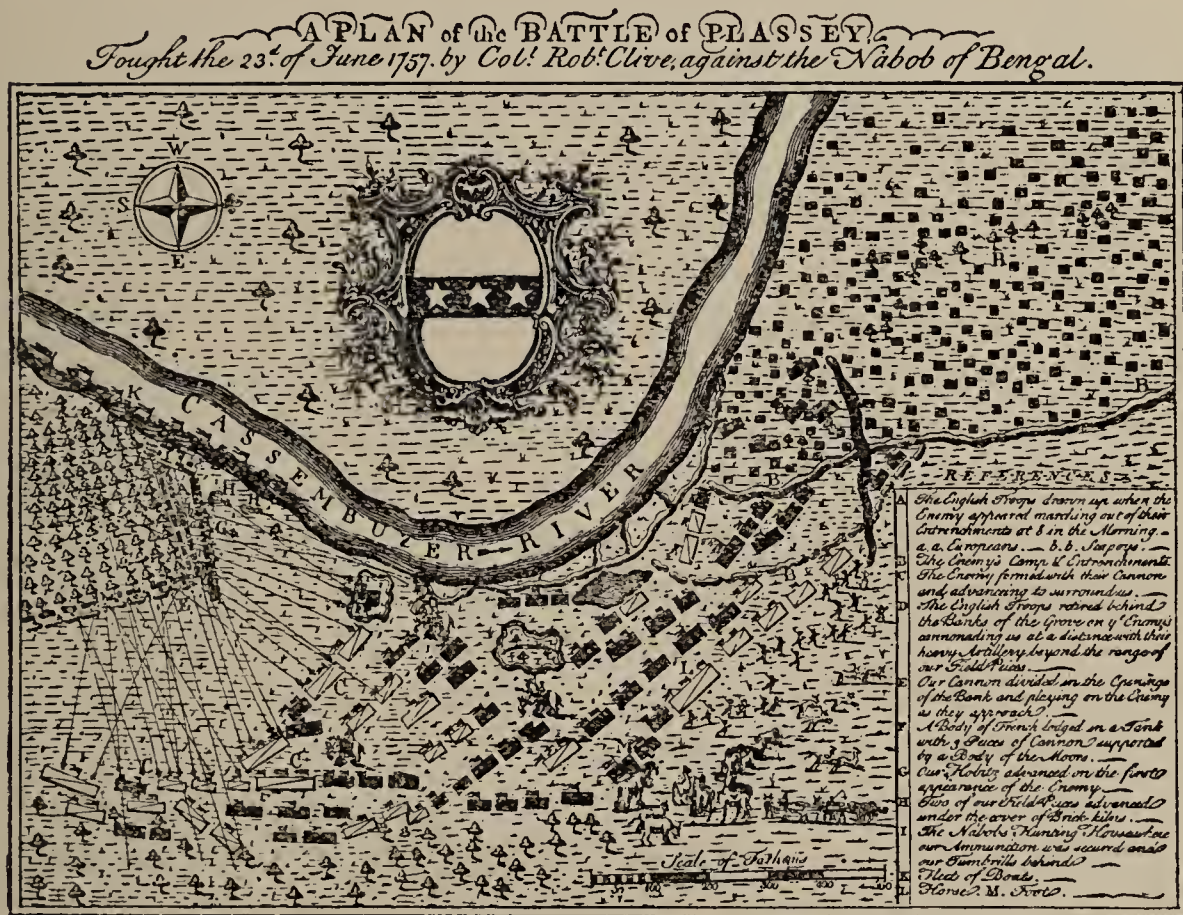
When the treaty was signed, Clive no longer considered it necessary to play with Suraj ud-Daulah. He sent to the nawab a despatch, setting forth the whole of the British grievances, and announced that he was coming with his men to the nawab's capital of Murshidabad to receive his answer. He followed his letter at the head of his troops—something over three thousand men, of whom two thousand were sepoy, and ten guns. The letter was despatched and the advance began on 13th June. The nawab moved to meet him with sixty thousand men at his back. On the fifth day the British halted at Katwa. There was no sign of Mir Jafar carrying out his promises, and the march was checked by stormy weather. On the eighth day Clive, for the first and last time of his life, held a council of war. An advance must mean either a victory against unparalleled odds or annihilation. Would it be better to take the risk, or to entrench themselves where they were at Katwa and invite aid from the Marathas, which might involve indefinite delay, and the intervention of Bussy on the other side? Clive's own opinion was given in favour of the more cautious course; eleven of the council of war supported him, seven voted for the advance. The council was broken up and Clive withdrew by himself to meditate on the situation. The result was that he reversed the decision of the council, and the advance was renewed in the morning.

The next night the British force, wet and weary, bivouacked in the grove of Plassey; and with the dawn of June 23 they were drawn up face to face with twenty times their own number of the nawab's troops. The morning passed in cannonading; as the afternoon advanced a small body of fifty Frenchmen, who were with the nawab's army, were seen to move; one of the British officers at once without orders occupied the spot where they had been posted. The nawab's guns were put out of action, Clive's line advanced, and the whole vast army broke before it and fled. So slight was the resistance offered that the vanquished lost only a few hundred men, the victors only seventy. Suraj ud-Daulah, fleeing in disguise from Murshidabad, was caught and murdered by the son of Mir Jafar. Clive, according to promise, proclaimed Mir Jafar nawab, but would allow no bloodshed. To the natives Clive became at once a sort of demi-god; and he found himself not only effective master of Mir Jafar himself, but for all practical purposes responsible master of all Bengal; while the fame of his miraculous powers spread over half India. It never occurred to the new nawab to regard himself as independent of the power which had placed him on the throne, and which would in no wise permit him to play the despot. It was manifestly impossible to pretend that effective government could be assumed



by any one except Clive and the British, whose lightest word none durst disobey.

Above all, it was out of the question that Clive should leave the province until some system had been organised for preserving the British control. Without any such design on their part the East India Company had become at a stroke a territorial power, lords of the richest province in India. Instructions for the formation of a government were sent out by the directors from London, who understood so little of the situation that Clive himself was not included in the commission; perhaps it was assumed that his military services would be in requisition elsewhere. The British on the spot, however, had no doubts, and deliberately placed themselves at their



Clive's victory at Plassey

[From a plan published in 1760.]

great chief's orders. A little later the directors sent revised instructions, which made Clive officially what he already was in actual fact. It was not till the end of 1760 that he felt able to retire from the scene of his triumphs and returned to England.

During the two and a half years of Clive's personal rule in Bengal the struggle between French and British was fought to a finish in the south; when he left India the French were cooped up in Pondichery, and were on the point of surrendering their last stronghold. In the conflict with them Clive took no further personal part; Bengal gave him enough to do. Six months after Plassey the Oudh Wazir threatened an invasion, but his armies melted away at the mere threat of Clive's approach. In 1758 the enormous prestige he had won enabled him almost to denude Bengal of British troops in order to despatch an expedition to seize Masulipatam, a



city on the east coast situated in the district called the Sarkars, just south of the river Godavery, an episode which belongs to the last phase of the struggle with the French. The departure of the troops induced the Nawab of Oudh to contemplate another invasion, this time in conjunction with the "Shahzada," the heir to the throne of the Mogul. Clive could only collect some four hundred British and about six times as many sepoys. With this small force he covered in twenty-three days the four hundred miles which separate Calcutta from Patna, to which the Shahzada had laid siege. The siege was raised, and the hosts of the Shahzada and the Wazir scattered in hasty flight.

Yet once more Clive had to display his promptitude and energy in emergency. The Dutch had played no important part in India, but they too had a factory at Chinsura, on the Hugli. Towards the end of 1759 seven of the Dutch company's ships appeared in the river. There was no quarrel between Dutch and British, but in fact the Dutchmen were not profiting by the sudden development of the British ascendancy, and they had given ear to the appeal of Mir Jafar, who was growing secretly restive in his position of subordination. Clive's suspicions were aroused, and became certainty when the Dutch seized some English vessels. Forde, the trusted officer whom Clive had sent against Masulipatam, was now back at Calcutta, having achieved his task. He was at once despatched against Chinsura, while three English ships under the command of Captain Wilson attacked and captured the seven Dutchmen. Mir Jafar promptly turned against his intended allies, who had to appeal to Clive himself for the protection which he extended to them. And so collapsed the last extraneous attempts at intervention in Bengal.

Eighteen months earlier the French had revived the contest by sending to the Carnatic some troops under the command of Lally, the son of an Irish father who had been one of the gallant defenders of Limerick. A brave and efficient soldier himself, he was absolutely devoid of tact in dealing with his own officers, his own men, or with natives. Also he was under positive orders to have no dealings with the native courts, whereas such chance as the French had lay almost entirely in the influence which Bussy exercised at the court of the Nizam. Now the Nizam had bestowed upon the French the coast district known as the Northern Sarkars, from which supplies ought to have been procurable. But Lally proceeded to summon Bussy from Haidarabad, and the troops from the Sarkars, in order to besiege Madras. Madras held out under Stringer Lawrence, and the appearance of a British squadron sent the besiegers hurrying back to Pondichery, to the wrath of their commander. And, meanwhile, Forde's expedition from Calcutta was attacking Masulipatam, which fell in April (1759). The Nizam, no longer under Bussy's personal control, found the British victory convincing, and granted the Sarkars to the British instead of to the French. The British successes were crowned in the following January, when Lally was defeated at Wandewash by Eyre Coote, one of



the officers who had voted in the audacious minority in Clive's council of war before Plassey. By October the French were swept up into Pondichery, and Pondichery itself surrendered in January 1761. So ended the struggle between French and British in India with the complete loss of the French power, confirmed by the peace two years later ; and so was the British East India Company established as a territorial power in Bengal.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE THIRD GEORGE

#### I

#### THE NEW RING

GEORGE III. was twenty-two years of age when he succeeded his grandfather. The old king had always been on the worst of terms with Frederick Prince of Wales and his wife ; their residence, Leicester House, had habi-

tually been the headquarters of opposition to the king's government ; and young George was brought up to hold his grandfather in contempt, and to set before himself very different monarchical ideals from those which George II. had, though not without reluctance, learnt to accept. Young George's mind was full of ideas of the "patriot king" who ruled the destinies of his subjects with a beneficent hand. Every leading European government—every government except those of Poland, Holland, and Switzerland—was absolutist, with only very slight modifications ; in Great Britain alone the system



George III. in 1767.

[From the painting by Allan Ramsay in the National Portrait Gallery.]

of constitutionalism or limited monarchy had prevailed. Strafford and Charles I. had paid with their heads, and James II. had paid with his crown, for attempting to establish in England a monarchy on the lines which triumphed on the continent. There was no possibility of reviving the Stuart theory ; the Crown would never again be able to override parliament. But parliament itself was not the free expression of the popular will ; it was in the hands of managers, the group of great Whig families who, so long as they held together, could control majorities and dictate to the Crown. It was the young king's design to break up the Whig connection and to form a party of his own which should dominate



parliament. After a ten years' struggle his efforts were crowned with success. He formed a party which commanded a safe parliamentary majority and took its orders from the king.

There was another enemy to the existing government by the Whig connection. Pitt, who refused to be bound by party shackles, hated the system as heartily as George. But merely to substitute the ascendancy in parliament of a court party for the ascendancy of the Whig families, which was practically the aim of George III., would have been no improvement in the eyes of the great minister. The ultimate solution was to be found in a reform of the representation which should make parliament responsible neither to an oligarchy nor to the Crown, but to a free electorate; but this solution still lay in the remote future. In the meantime the king was no more disposed to submit to Pitt's ascendancy, won by the sheer force of his personality, than to the ascendancy of the Whig connection. The success of the Crown was to be achieved by setting the Whigs at odds with each other and with Pitt, and by rallying to the support of the Crown the forces which had been kept in abeyance by the fear of Jacobitism, and the sentiment of loyalty to the king's person which had been concentrated upon the "king over the water" during the last two reigns. That sentiment could be attracted to the new king, who was born and bred in England under the influence of English and Scottish preceptors, and could declare that he "gloried in the name of Britain" (not "Briton," as is commonly stated). George I. had been an uncompromising German who could not even converse in English; George II. was thirty before he had set foot in England; George III. was the fellow-countryman of his subjects. Moreover, now there was scarcely a flicker of Jacobitism to divert the sentiment of loyalty from a British king. James, now past seventy, had alienated the once ready devotion of his followers, and the promise of the youth of Charles Edward Stuart had already been drowned in debauchery and despair.

## II

### BUTE

After George's mother the most intimate personal influence over the young king was exercised by the Earl of Bute, a gentleman of some accomplishments, eminently respectable, and without any qualifications for statesmanship. George intended to get rid of Newcastle, the manipulator of offices, and of Pitt, who could command but would not serve. Bute was to be the minister who would carry out his policy; but nothing could be done while the ministry was united. There were openings for dissension, because Pitt despised Newcastle, and Newcastle was both afraid and jealous of Pitt. The "Great Commoner" had carried the nation through a crisis to



triumph ; British victories had become a matter of course ; but the war expenditure had been enormous, and the rewards of the struggle already secured appeared to be sufficient. A peace party was growing up among the ministers.

At the first, however, the new influences were brought to bear not for the displacement of Pitt, but to encourage and develop his antagonism to the Whig control. Although the king expressed himself strongly as to the war and his desire for peace, no attempt was made to check the vigour of the operations. In the early summer a British expedition captured and occupied Belle Ile, an island off the French coast which was of no particular importance in itself, but an extremely useful asset for purposes of negotiation, being actually French soil. British troops, led by Granby, again achieved brilliant distinction under Prince Ferdinand at the battle of Wellinghausen. In the West Indies the island of Dominica was taken from the French, and from India came the news of the fall of Pondichery.

Meanwhile, however, negotiations were passing with France, though with very definite assertions from Pitt that Great Britain would not desert the king of Prussia. Moreover, he was extremely suspicious of the sincerity of the French proposals, believing with justice that France was in fact working not for immediate peace but to bring Spain into the field. On the one side Pitt's demands stiffened, while on the other France began to make demands on behalf of Spain, and Spain on behalf of France ; and before the end of the summer Pitt had information of the existence of a new Family Compact, though the details were as yet unknown. Newcastle, however, had already brought Bute into office as a Secretary of State. Pitt came to the conclusion that although there was no real *casus belli*, war must be declared at once against Spain. He failed to carry the rest of the ministers with him in that view, whereupon in October he and his brother-in-law, Lord Temple, resigned, since he declined to retain office if the direction of affairs were taken out of his hands.

Spain had denied the imputation that she was acting in concert with France ; she had in fact been anxious to avoid a breach before the arrival of the annual Plate Fleet. When the fleet came in the mask was dropped and the new Family Compact was published ; Pitt's attitude was justified, but he was already out of office. At the beginning of 1762 Bute, as the king's representative, dominated the ministry, and a few months later was able to force the resignation of Newcastle, who found his favourite business of exercising patronage entirely taken out of his hands.

During the past year it had seemed that Frederick's stubborn resistance must be gradually worn down. The Russians were in Pomerania, and the Austrians were slowly gaining ground in Silesia. It was fortunate for him that three months after his best supporter, Pitt, had lost the direction of affairs in England, the pressure from Russia was suddenly withdrawn by the death of Elizabeth and the accession to the Russian throne of a Tsar



But when the Family Compact was published, even Bute could not evade war with Spain, and even Pitt's retirement could not check the tide of British victories. In fact Spain had merely delivered herself as a prey to the power whom the Bourbons called the Tyrant of the Seas. Britain could strike where she would and when she would. The Bourbons tried to compel Portugal to join them; Portugal refused, and British troops were despatched to aid her in successfully defying Spanish coercion. A British fleet was engaged in appropriating one after another the French islands in the West Indies; one expedition deprived Spain of Havanna, and another in the East Indies, directed against the Philippine Islands, captured Manilla. Bute refused to renew the subsidies to Prussia, but Frederick was more than compensated by the change in the attitude of Russia.

If Pitt had been in power he would have dictated what terms he chose to France and Spain, and Austria would have been placed on the defensive. But Bute was too zealous for peace to dictate terms, and the Bourbons got from him a bargain very much better than was at all pleasing to the British nation. Preliminaries of peace, signed in November, were ratified by the Peace of Paris in February 1763. Frederick, deserted by his ally, was still enabled by the recent progress of his arms to make for himself a satisfactory treaty at Hubertsburg, though he never forgave what he and others regarded as the treachery of the British Government. Bute had achieved the isolation of Great Britain by deliberately throwing away

BRITISH 25.



A satire of 1762 on Bute and his Administration.

[From an etching by the Marquis Townshend, who, in 1767, became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.]



Prussia's goodwill. And for Great Britain herself, he threw away practically the whole of the fruits of the last twelve months of the war. Had his course been dictated by magnanimity, by a belief that policy and chivalry combined to forbid the victor making too merciless a use of his triumph, he would have been justified; but the attempts of the Government to portray the Treaty of Paris as a diplomatic triumph merely stamped it as a diplomatic defeat. Great Britain could have well afforded to be magnanimous, but magnanimity played no part in the concessions made by Bute's Government.

The general principle of the treaty was the retention or exchange of conquests made during the war; but by a somewhat remarkable concession conquests which had been made, but of which no official information had arrived at the moment when the treaty was signed, were surrendered. Consequently the capture of Manilla went for nothing. France had made a single conquest, that of Minorca at the opening of the war; this was exchanged for Belle Ile. Minorca was extremely useful, while Belle Ile was very little use to Great Britain; but French *amour propre* was so deeply concerned in its recovery that the exchange could not be regarded as unequal. Spain, which had intervened without provocation in the last stage of the quarrel, escaped almost scot-free; since Britain accepted Florida in place of the infinitely more valuable Havanna, and France compensated Spain for this minor loss by ceding to her Louisiana, which remained in her hands till the end of the century, when it was retroceded to France, and was sold three years afterwards to the United States by Napoleon. For no very sufficient reason, Guadeloupe and Martinique in the West Indies and Goree on the African coast were given back to France. This completes the tale of the mere surrenders, for Bute himself could hardly give back what had actually been won before Pitt's retirement, though he gave way on points of detail where Pitt would undoubtedly have held firm, such as leaving to the French the fishing rights off Newfoundland which they had retained under the Treaty of Utrecht—ill-defined rights which were to be a source of complications down to the close of the nineteenth century.

But the acquisitions confirmed by the treaty were sufficient. All the French claims on the American continent were withdrawn; there was no check on the British expansion westward to the Pacific. The whole of Canada was ceded, and the French population, otherwise practically undisturbed, passed under the sovereignty of Great Britain instead of the sovereignty of France. In India the French factories were restored, but as factories and nothing more. No French troops were to be admitted beyond the very small number required for what were in effect police purposes, nor were the French to be permitted to enter into relations with the native courts. Political power in the peninsula, so far as the European states were concerned, was entirely restricted to the British. In the East and in the West a British Empire was established at the Peace of Paris,



not side by side with a French Empire, but to the total exclusion of all European rivals.

By the simultaneous Peace of Hubertsburg, Britain's deserted ally, Frederick, secured to Prussia all that she had held before his invasion of Saxony in 1756.

## III

## GEORGE GRENVILLE

The Peace of Paris was very unpopular, and Bute's personal unpopularity was still greater, partly because he was a Scot, partly because he was looked upon as a "favourite," partly because he had ousted Pitt, and partly because his statesmanship was regarded as pusillanimous. A couple of months after the Peace of Paris he resigned, although for some time to come the public at large continued to believe that he was the real director of the government. The king had got rid of Pitt and of Newcastle, but he had not got rid of the domination of that strong section of the Whigs, which disliked equally the personal ascendancy of Pitt and Newcastle's monopoly of patronage. George found himself compelled to submit to the tyranny of this group, headed by George Grenville and the Duke of Bedford, because the only alternative was to recall Pitt himself, and Pitt would only return upon impossible terms. Moreover, except in the desire to break up the Whig connection, the king's political views were diametrically opposed to those of the fallen minister, and were in agreement with those of the Bedford group; the trouble lay in the fact that the chiefs of the Whig group made themselves personally intensely obnoxious to the king. For two years he had to bear the yoke, though he was restive enough under it; and at the end of two years he could only free himself by calling to office, without Pitt himself, a group of Whigs whose most earnest wish was to serve under Pitt, and who sought to carry out a policy to which the king himself was intensely antagonistic.

George Grenville, who became the real head of the administration on Bute's retirement, was a capable official, but at the same time an incarnation of official pedantry, to whom the letter was everything and the spirit nothing. His absorption in details entirely prevented him from taking comprehensive views, or from realising the existence of forces which could not be tabulated in Blue Books. He was wholly devoid of that tact which is born of a sympathetic understanding of divergent points of view, and he lacked also that sense of perspective which distinguishes between the importance of what is trivial and the importance of what is fundamental. Consequently during his administration the trivial blazed into prominence, and the fundamental was overlooked, with disastrous results. An unscrupulous adventurer was enabled to pose as the martyr of Liberty in



order to salve the susceptibilities of the Government and the House of Commons, while the vital question of the relations between the mother country and the colonies was dealt with offhand as a mere byway of official routine.

John Wilkes was a clever scamp, with the loosest of morals and a passion for notoriety, which was not satisfied by a wide reputation for reckless and indecent dissipation. Wilkes had started a paper called the *North Briton*, chiefly devoted to abuse of Bute, the Scots, and the Government. The king's speech at the opening of parliament claimed applause for the Peace of Paris, and, with a singular audacity, for the satisfactory terms obtained by Frederick. Wilkes in "Number 45" of his paper very justly stigmatised this profession as a lie put into the mouth of the king by his ministers. George and the ministers were alike furious. A general warrant was issued for the arrest of the author printers and publishers of the paper, without mentioning the names of the parties. Wilkes was arrested, and his papers were searched without the formality of obtaining formal proof of the authorship, and he himself was rigorously confined and forbidden the use of pen and ink.

But when the matter came before Chief Justice Pratt, he ordered the release of Wilkes on the ground that members of parliament were immune from arrest, except for treason, felony, or breach of the peace, categories under which Wilkes's offence could by no means be brought. Moreover, the Chief Justice pronounced that general warrants were illegal. The ministers, not content to let ill alone, went on to demand in the House of Commons that Number 45 should be burnt by the public hangman as a "false scurrilous and seditious libel"; and the House of Lords carried an address praying that Wilkes should be prosecuted as the author of a certain obscene work entitled an *Essay on Woman*, which was produced by one of his old partners in debauchery and iniquity, Lord Sandwich, although the thing had never been published at all. Meanwhile Wilkes had betaken himself to France to escape the consequences of a duel; in his absence he was outlawed and the House of Commons expelled him. At the same time the courts awarded him heavy damages for false imprisonment, and riots attested his popularity with the mob. The whole of the proceedings gave Wilkes an entirely fictitious importance, and at the same time brought into prominence the arrogant claims of the House of Commons, or of a temporary majority in the House of Commons, to assert its own authority as overriding that of the common law. The privileges of the Commons, the rights of the electorate, and the right of free criticism outside the House of Commons, were again a few years later to provide a battlefield between the champion of liberty and the champions of privilege. For the moment the victory rested with the Commons, because it was not safe for the outlaw to reappear in England; but it was at the cost of their dignity and credit, and at the second encounter five years later they were very thoroughly worsted.



But even from a ministerial point of view the Wilkes affair was no more than an accident, though it was one to which their own conduct had given a preposterous importance in the eyes of the public. George Grenville's real business was retrenchment after the portentous expenditure on the war. The National Debt had swelled to alarming proportions, and it appeared to Grenville first that there must be an end of the long prevalent laxity in applying the revenue laws, and, secondly, that the American colonies in whose interests primarily Great Britain had entered upon the war, ought to make a substantial contribution to the expenses; propositions which were in themselves manifestly just. Therefore he proceeded to assert the technical rights of the mother country. Past governments had deliberately shut their eyes to the immense illicit traffic carried on by the Americans, their persistent disregard of the navigation laws, and their evasion of the customs duties. Instructions were issued that the smuggling was to be stopped, and ships of the Royal Navy were employed in the preventive service. The colonies were invited to consider and suggest proposals for laying them under contribution, but unfortunately Grenville had already made up his own mind that the contributions were to be obtained through the imposition of taxes by the British parliament—a scheme which took definite shape in the famous Stamp Act of 1765.

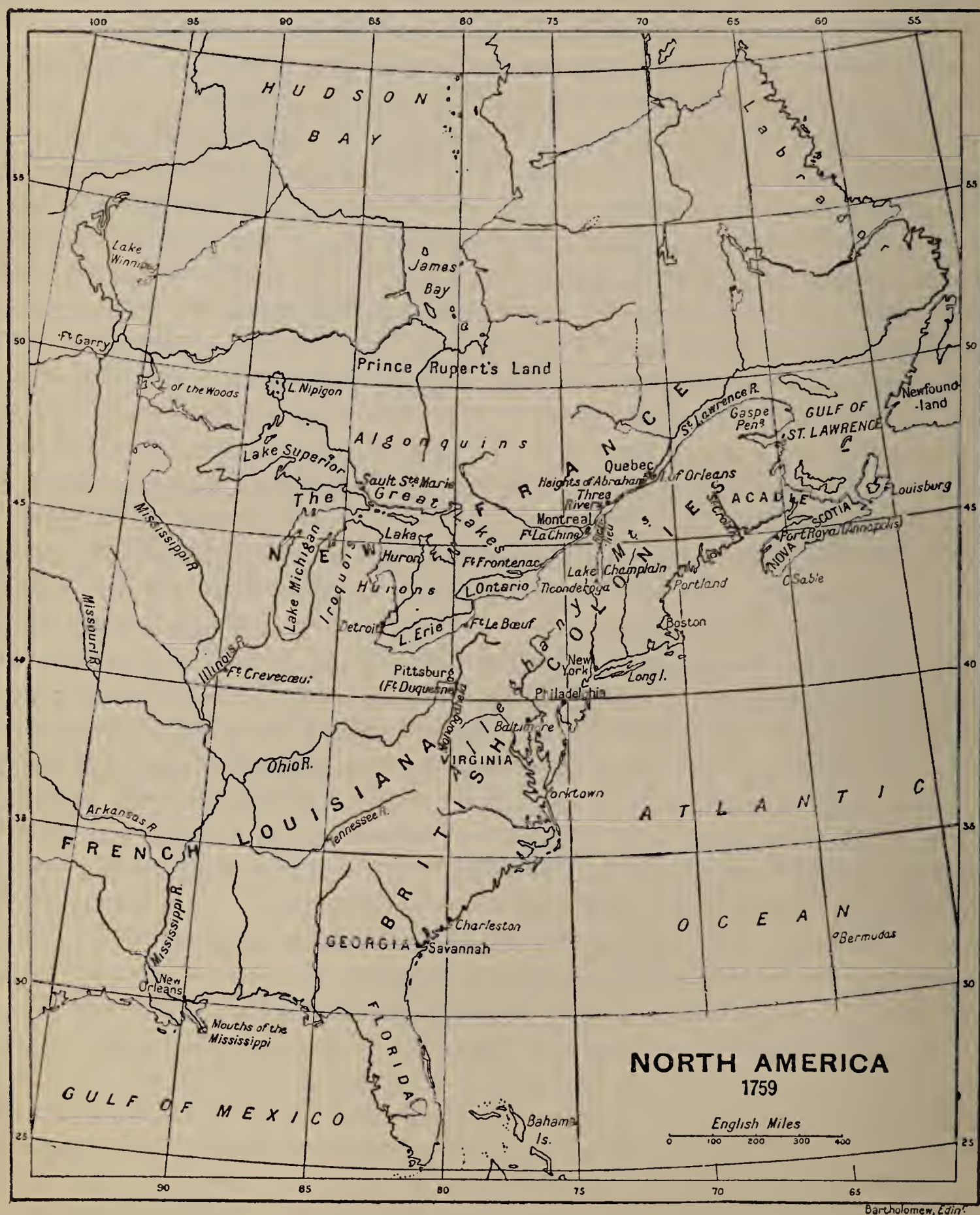
Now the colonists occupied the colonies under specific charters which reserved controlling powers to the Crown. The reservation of powers was admittedly a technical necessity; emergencies might arise when their exercise would be imperative. On the other hand, it could plausibly be maintained that they were intended to be used only on emergency; that apart from emergencies the colonies were entitled to regard themselves and to be regarded as autonomous states. In one respect at least that claim had never been admitted in England; it had at all times been assumed that the mother country was entitled to impose trade regulations on the colonists for her own protection, though the colonists might suffer. Also from time to time the Crown had interfered with the governments of particular colonies; but its doing so had always been resented, though the colonists had found themselves obliged to submit.

In fact the consciousness had hitherto been ever present with them, that they depended on the mother country for security against their French rivals. Detached from each other and without any central government, they might still have held their own against the French colonists in actual occupation of Canada and Louisiana; but if France herself took up the cause, they would be overwhelmed unless they could rely on British fleets and British regiments to support them. Therefore although they had grumbled, and on occasion had gone beyond grumbling, they had still on the whole accepted the control exercised from the old country as something which must be endured.

But the situation had been fundamentally changed by the war. The militia of the several colonies felt themselves able to cope with the Red



Indians, and now they had nothing to fear from France. It ceased to be tacitly assumed that the protection of the mother country was a necessity which was worth purchasing at the price of a subjection which only made itself felt intermittently. It was, in fact, certain that the colonists would



very soon demand a relaxation even of the technical authority asserted by the home government, laid down by the charters, and confirmed by practice throughout the century and a half which covered the lifetime of every colony except Virginia.

Now although there were already revolutionary spirits who would have



been by no means reluctant to demand complete independence, the great bulk of the Americans would have indignantly repudiated the idea of separation. They were in fact aware that they were very much indebted to the mother country for deliverance from the French menace, and in the abstract they were even quite willing to admit a moral obligation to repay a little of what Great Britain had spent primarily on their behalf. But there was no technical obligation to do so, and it was not difficult to maintain that the mother country was after all fairly compensated by the benefits that would accrue to it from the acquisition of Canada. A minister at Westminster with any real grasp of the situation would have used the occasion to encourage the sentiment of loyalty to the Empire by every means in his power, while appealing to colonial patriotism and gratitude to lighten the financial burden which the recent war had entailed upon Great Britain. Unhappily, Grenville could think of nothing but the relief of that burden. He did not believe that appeals to patriotism and loyalty would meet with an adequate response in hard cash. The states might feel conscious of their obligations as a body, but individually each would discover very good reasons why its neighbours were in duty bound to pay a much larger proportion than itself; and there was no common authority to lay down a general principle of contribution or to assess the respective shares of the different states. Grenville then having rejected the idea of a voluntary thank-offering, and having no idea of conciliating popular feeling, there remained to him the technical power of imposing and enforcing taxation for the purposes of revenue. In order to provide revenue the existing customs were enforced, and the new Stamp Act was passed, almost unnoticed in England.

In effect the minister at one breath informed the colonists that he had no confidence in their loyalty or gratitude, laid on them a new burden, which, while trifling in itself, was galling in the method of its application, and emphasised precisely what was most irritating to the colonists in the relations between them and the mother country. In dealing with the colonies the British parliament claimed to override what for England the English parliament had asserted to be the elementary right of English citizenship in that last palladium of English liberties, the Bill of Rights. No one should be taxed save by consent of a representative parliament, and the parliament at Westminster was in no conceivable sense representative of the colonies. There was an immediate outcry that such taxation was a monstrous and unprecedented innovation, in defiance of the base principles of English citizenship.

Perhaps we are apt at first sight to wonder why the new tax was treated as a monstrous innovation. The colonies were accustomed to duties paid at the ports imposed by the home government; why should they have resented the imposition of the Stamp Tax, which required a stamp to be purchased and affixed to give validity to legal documents? The explanation is that a "tax" in the technical sense was taken to mean an impost levied



for the purpose of raising revenue. The customs at the ports were, theoretically at least, levied not with the intention of raising a revenue, but in order to control trade and develop trade in the national interest. Thus, for instance, French wines were heavily taxed in British ports not because the toll upon them brought money into the treasury, but in order to check the purchase of French wines. Portuguese wines were lightly taxed, not because a larger revenue came in from lightly taxed goods than from heavily taxed goods, but in order to encourage the Portuguese trade. The Americans had been subjected to the payment of customs duties on the same principles. In the same way in the Plantagenet times the "ancient customs" for the regulation of trade were levied by the king by royal prerogative; parliament resisted any extension of the tolls by royal prerogative precisely because extension was attempted in order to provide revenue. The continued regulation of colonial trade by the king in parliament at Westminster was no breach of the established principles, for the king had merely handed over to parliament certain particular functions, theoretically as a matter of administrative convenience. Trade regulation was a burden which the colonies would not have borne much longer in any case; but a new and suspicious aspect was given to the existing system when the revenue laws began to be rigorously enforced avowedly for the purpose of increasing the revenue; and a definite innovation declared itself when an unmistakable tax was imposed, an internal tax for which there was no precedent, a tax which had nothing whatever to do with the regulation of trade, for the sole purpose of raising revenue. Here at last was actual taxation without representation. Even if the right did legally exist, even if it was a right of which the home government could not with safety technically deprive itself, its actual exercise was without precedent, and provided the colonists with precisely that technical ground of complaint which had before been lacking. The colonists were presented with a constitutional formula, "No taxation without representation," a formula to which it was difficult for Whigs, who professed to be the guardians of the principles of the Revolution of 1688, to close their ears.

Ministers were wholly unconscious of the importance of the issue which they had raised. The amount of the tax was not great, and it was taken for granted that opposition would be merely superficial. There was no practical possibility of giving colonists direct representation in the parliament at Westminster; no adequate response could be anticipated to an appeal for a voluntary contribution; and they had followed the merely obvious course in exercising a right which, as an actual matter of law, they did possess. The colonists would soon find that the burden imposed was too slight to be a real grievance. The colonists took a different view. One after another their assemblies passed resolutions denying the power of taxation. At the instance of Massachusetts the various assemblies sent delegates to a general congress at New York, where the unanimity of colonial feeling found expression. Associations were formed for the boy-



cotting of imported goods until the Stamp Act should be repealed. Riots took place in Boston and elsewhere; the officials nominated for the administration of the Stamp Act refused the appointments or were threatened into resigning; when the stamps themselves arrived it was obvious that they would never be distributed; for the most part they were seized and destroyed. In England the mercantile community at once suffered from the pressure of the boycott, and was strongly in favour of the repeal of the Act.

Meanwhile, other events brought the antagonism of the king and the ministry to a head, for on the colonial question itself King George was practically at one with Grenville. George developed symptoms of the brain trouble which so completely darkened the last years of his life. It became necessary to provide for a regency in case the king should be incapacitated. Ministers were bent on excluding George's mother, the Dowager Princess of Wales, believing that if she became regent Bute would recover his ascendancy. They persuaded the king to approve the omission of her name from the list of eligible persons by declaring that the House of Commons would certainly demand it, and a very awkward situation would be created. The king assented with reluctance; the Regency Bill was brought in—and the House of Commons proceeded to add the Princess of Wales to the list of possible regents. The king, who recovered his health for a time, was furious with the ministers, and determined to dispense with their services at any price. Twice he sent for Pitt and entreated him to form a government; twice Pitt refused, because his brother-in-law, Lord Temple, insisted upon impossible terms, and he would not separate himself from Temple. George had no alternative but an appeal to the Whigs who associated themselves with Pitt's principles, and a ministry was constructed in July (1765) by the Marquis of Rockingham.

#### IV

#### THE ROCKINGHAMS AND THE EARL OF CHATHAM

The old Whig connection which for a time had worked successfully in the days of the coalition between Pitt and Newcastle had been broken up. Even in those days, when its ranks included several men of marked ability and experience in affairs, it had not been productive of leaders. The Rockingham group represented the survival of that Whig tradition, but the individuals who formed it were for the most part comparatively young men of talent which could at the best be called respectable, and they were wanting in experience. More conspicuously than ever the Government rested upon family connection; it carried little weight, and was regarded with little confidence. It was a makeshift Government, brought



into being and preserved by the reluctant support of the king and the court party which the king had created, a support which was certain to be withdrawn as soon as the downfall of the ministry should be compatible with some alternative to the return of Grenville and Bedford. Pitt, although it was his own fault that he was not at the head of the government, chose somewhat ostentatiously to express mistrust of the men who for the most part would have been only too willing to submit themselves

to his direct guidance.

The ministers did not formulate a definite programme; it was not till the end of the year that they decided to reverse Grenville's American policy. In this decision they were guided mainly by the opinions of Pitt himself, who laid it down that the British parliament had no right to impose taxes, though it had the power of legislation for the colonies. Parliament did not meet till January 1766, when for the first time a new and notable figure appeared among its members — Rockingham's secretary, Edmund Burke. With the support of Pitt, the Government brought

in and carried by substantial majorities a bill for the repeal of the Stamp Act; and, in spite, of his opposition, an accompanying Declaratory Act affirming the legal authority of parliament to impose taxation. The latter, in fact, was passed merely in order to save the self-respect of parliament; it was a purely formal declaration, intended to be in practice a dead letter. During their brief tenure of power the ministry applied to America Walpole's principle of reducing tariffs, of which the Americans certainly could not complain, while its wisdom was demonstrated by the increased revenue which accrued. Smuggling in order to evade the reduced duties was not worth while; the lowered price following the lower duties extended the demand, and there was a very substantial increase in the quantity of goods on which duty was paid.

But there was no confidence between the Crown and the ministers.



William Pitt, Earl of Chatham.

[From the painting by R. Brompton.]



King George in the course of a single week had authorised first Rockingham to say that he was in favour of the repeal of the Stamp Act, and then a member of the court party, now known as the "king's friends," to say that he was opposed to it. He explained the matter to Rockingham by saying that while he was in favour of repeal as opposed to the simple retention of the Act, what he desired was not its repeal but its modification. But the incident was a most unmistakable sign that he had no intention of giving the ministry his countenance longer than he could help.

It became known that Pitt was ready to resume office on his own terms, and no longer on terms dictated by Temple. But Rockingham, on approaching him, found that his terms meant a dictatorship, and a reconstruction of the ministry to which Rockingham could not with honour make himself a party. Pitt would not recognise the Whig connection; he would not work in conjunction with Newcastle, who was no longer a power, or with some other members of the ministry, and he would bring in other men who could not assimilate with the Rockingham group. Some of the warmer personal adherents of Pitt resigned, the administration came to an end, and once more Pitt returned to the helm.

Pitt's desire was to rule without party, to ignore party ties altogether; and he collected round him a singularly heterogeneous group of ministers gathered from every quarter—members of Rockingham's ministry, personal adherents of his own, king's friends, and others. What he might have done with such a body in the plenitude of his powers we cannot say. Assuredly he had large designs. The American question appeared to have been cleared out of the way. He would certainly have sought to reinvigorate the public services, which had achieved such a splendid efficiency under his previous régime, but had drifted rapidly towards decay under the Grenville policy of extreme retrenchment. He was certainly meditating the transfer to the Crown of the territorial sovereignty which the East India Company had acquired in India. But within a few months of his assumption of office the direction passed out of his hands. His popularity in the country and his personal effectiveness in parliament suffered grievously when the "Great Commoner," as he had hitherto been called, accepted a peerage, and was transferred from the representative chamber to the House of Lords with the title of Earl of Chatham. But more serious still was the breakdown of his physical and intellectual powers, brought on by the gout of which he was an unhappy victim. His sufferings exaggerated his natural arrogance and irritability until he became almost intolerable as a colleague, and then incapacitated him altogether for taking any part in public business. After the first month of 1767 the ministry, of which Lord Grafton was the figurehead, ceased to be in any sense Chatham's ministry. The things that Chatham would have done were left undone; the things that were done were precisely the things that Chatham would have condemned.



## V

## TOWNSHEND'S TAXES AND JOHN WILKES

Chatham in 1766 had no time to do more than take the first steps towards carrying out the foreign policy which he desired. The Family Compact had been a warning that neither France nor the new government in Spain had forgotten the old scheme for advancing the Bourbons, and the Peace of Paris had dealt with these powers tenderly enough to make the revival of those schemes a possibility. Chatham designed a general alliance of the Northern Powers, which would have very thoroughly bridled Bourbon ambitions. Frederick, however, was not greatly troubled by Bourbon ambitions; he was now intent rather upon the dismemberment for his own advantage of the kingdom of Poland. Also, while he had the highest admiration for Chatham, he had no sort of security that that statesman would remain in power in England, and he was not at all disposed to risk a repetition of the treatment he had experienced in 1762. It is likely therefore that Chatham would in any case have failed in achieving his Northern Alliance.

But failure in this direction would not have induced him, as it induced the Grafton ministry, to forget that British interests might be affected by affairs in Europe. British interests perhaps did not suffer in consequence, at least directly. But the isolation of Great Britain, for which Bute had been primarily responsible, was intensified, and one curious result of her indifference to European affairs is to be noted. The island of Corsica was subject to the republic of Genoa; but the subjection was very much against the will of the Corsicans. Corsican patriots, led by Paoli, resisted the Genoese government and defied all efforts to suppress them. The insurgents offered the sovereignty to Great Britain. Great Britain declined it; Genoa ceded the sovereignty to France, and Napoleon Buonaparte was born a few months afterwards a French instead of a British subject.

Chatham was no sooner incapacitated than his Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, took the leading place in the House of Commons, and, with a light heart, conducted it along a path which it was quite willing to tread, but upon which Chatham would never have allowed it to set foot. In America the repeal of the Stamp Act had allayed the public excitement, but had scarcely produced the effect hoped for. The colonials in fact conceived not that the British Government had made a magnanimous concession for which they ought to be grateful, but that it had been forced to give way. Their tone irritated English sentiment, which before had been rather favourably disposed towards them. Townshend at once proposed, as a practical corollary to the Declaratory Act of the Rockingham ministry, to impose new taxes—taxes upon imports, and therefore



not without ample precedent, but taxes for revenue, and therefore entirely obnoxious.

The taxes themselves were trivial ; the revenue expected to be derived from them was only some forty thousand pounds. Glass, red and white lead, painters' colours, paper and tea were the imports upon which the new duties were laid. Of the whole group none was of the slightest importance except the last, and the tea tax was actually so arranged as to reduce the cost of the tea to the American consumers. In the ordinary course tea could only be carried to America after paying duty at a port in Great Britain. The duty now imposed at the American ports was not added to the duty at the British ports, but was a lower duty substituted for the latter. Financially



“A View of the Town of Boston in New England, and British Ships of War landing their troops.”

[From a print engraved and published by Paul Revere at Boston in 1768.]

the thing was a boon rather than a grievance. But a principle was at stake, not pounds shillings and pence. All the mollifying effects of the repeal of the Stamp Act were swept away, all the latent irritation broke out with renewed vehemence. In plain terms, the public at large and nearly all the leaders both in Great Britain and in America lost their tempers, and therewith the capacity for appreciating what was reasonable in the attitude of the other side.

When once mutual distrust has been generated the smallest points of friction become exaggerated, and the utmost tact and skill are always needed to bring about a satisfactory adjustment. But the difficulties are indefinitely increased when the parties are remote from each other and communication is slow. Knowledge of the mother country in the colonies was limited ; knowledge of the colonies in the mother country was infini-



tesimal. Despatches from colonial agents in London and from government officials in the colonies took a very long time in passing ; between the forwarding of a document and the receipt of a reply there was time for the whole situation to become completely changed. It is difficult enough even at the present day, when a trip to the remotest parts of the Empire provides a holiday amusement for persons of leisure, when the speech of a statesman in London may be printed and discussed in Melbourne and Montreal twenty-four hours after its delivery, for the British public to gauge accurately the views of Canadians and Australians, and *vice versa*. A hundred and fifty years ago it was infinitely more difficult for Westminster to be really in touch with Massachusetts and Virginia. The quarrel between Great Britain and the colonies may have been actually incapable of adjustment ; but conditions of the time, which we of necessity have the utmost difficulty in realising, made the chances of adjustment infinitely less.

In America, then, the associations for exclusive dealing at once revived the activities which they had suspended when the Stamp Act was repealed. Illicit traffic and the evasion of customs became laudable aims for respectable, law-abiding citizens, while the officers of the law became the minions of tyranny. And at the same time in the eyes of the British public in general the Americans appeared to be revolutionary anarchists, with whom it was hardly possible for the law-loving Briton to sympathise, and for whom it was not easy even to make allowances. There was, indeed, a strong body of enlightened opinion which appreciated the reality of the American grievance, and perhaps weakened its own case with the public by the vigour of its expressions of sympathy ; but there can be no doubt that the great mass of public opinion in Great Britain was entirely on the side of ministers.

The arch mischief-maker, Charles Townshend, died three months after he had fired the train. His place as Chancellor of the Exchequer was taken by the Tory Lord North, with whom allegiance to the king was a first principle. The ministers who were most inclined to maintain Chatham's views carried the least weight in a ministry to which were now admitted some members of the old Bedford connection, who showed themselves entirely ready to bow to the king's direction, while in the nature of things they were at one with the Crown on the real question of the hour. In 1768 parliament was dissolved and ministers returned with renewed strength, while there was still no sign of a recovery of health on Chatham's part which would enable him to emerge from his retirement.

The general election provided a fresh excitement which absorbed much popular attention. John Wilkes, though still under sentence of outlawry, reappeared and stood for the City of London ; being there rejected, he came forward as a candidate for the county of Middlesex, and was returned by a large majority. Unfortunately King George was vindictive, and he was irritated by Wilkes's popularity with the mob. Wilkes was arrested upon the sentence of outlawry ; there were riots, collisions between the



mob and the soldiery, who fired upon the rioters and killed or wounded a few. Wilkes, in prison, procured a copy of the order from the Secretary of State, Lord Weymouth, under which the soldiery had acted. He published it with comments, accusing Weymouth of having planned the "massacre." The publication was followed by a motion for the expulsion of Wilkes from the House, based on the old charges. In spite of the remonstrances of Grenville as well as of Burke the expulsion was carried by a large majority. A fortnight later Wilkes was re-elected. The House annulled the election, and declared him incapable of sitting in the present parliament; nevertheless he was again elected for the third time, for it was an entirely novel claim that the House should by its own authority, without colour of any law, declare any one incapable of election. The House again annulled the election. A certain Colonel Luttrell was procured to stand for Middlesex against Wilkes, and when Wilkes was again returned with a big majority over Luttrell, the House nevertheless pronounced that Luttrell was the duly elected member. The House of Commons had asserted the right of overriding the will of the electorate by the mere resolution of a party majority.



Wilkes assuring George III. that he had never been a Wilkite.  
[From the caricature by Gillray.]

Wilkes was erected into the position of the champion of popular liberties against the arbitrary privileges of the House of Commons, far more decisively than in the earlier encounter.

The Crown of old, by straining prerogative beyond limits for which there was clear precedent, had brought upon itself the curtailment of prerogative. The Commons now by an extravagant insistence on their own privileges, not as against the Crown but as against the general public, brought upon themselves a curtailment of privileges. Wilkes, the rejected of the House, was made an alderman of the City of London, which gave expression to the popular antagonism. A conflict on a question of jurisdiction between the House and the City was mixed up with the general question of the liberty of the press, and the result of the conflict was the victory of the press.



There were two questions involved ; one concerned parliamentary privilege, the other the law of libel. Technically, until this time parliamentary debates had been private ; their publication was forbidden as a breach of the privileges of the Houses, while anything in the nature of comment was liable to be construed as libel. Nevertheless reports under very flimsy disguises found their way into print, and the press of the day was frequently both caustic and scurrilous. The House of Commons sought to protect itself by a rigorous application of the law of libel, and it was laid down by Lord Mansfield that juries were concerned only with the fact of publication, while everything else lay in the province of the judge. The general result was that juries refused to convict even in the face of unmistakable evidence ; it became obvious that the publication of distorted reports and of comment thereon could not be prevented ; and not less obvious that in the circumstances it would be very much safer to permit the open and avowed publication of reports, which would at least ensure approximate accuracy instead of deliberate distortion. A later result was the definite transfer of the decision as to the character of publications from the judge to the jury ; and thus in effect the quarrel between Wilkes and the Commons secured the liberty of the press at least within the limits approved by public opinion. And at the same time the exercise of the undisputed right of the House of Commons to decide questions concerning elections was first delegated to a non-partisan committee instead of to the decision of a party vote, and was ultimately transferred to the judges.

At the end of 1768 Shelburne, the minister most favourable to the colonists, was driven from office, and this was shortly followed by the formal resignation of Chatham, who was recovering from his illness only to find that he was completely opposed to his nominal colleagues in their policy with regard both to Wilkes and to the colonies. Grafton, the nominal head of the government, sought again to conciliate American opinion by repealing Townshend's duties ; but matters were only made worse when his colleagues insisted on retaining that upon tea. The Americans did not in the least care about the specific articles which Townshend had taxed ; from their point of view there was just as much reason for resisting the tax on one article as on half-a-dozen. On the top of this the Bedford group proposed to act upon a statute of Henry VIII. which had not been applied for a couple of centuries, and to transfer the trials of rioters in America to a part of the country where there was no disaffection—in other words, to England. Chatham, now back in the House of Lords, flung his thunderbolts at the government ; Campden, followed by Grafton, resigned ; and so in 1770 the king was able to form an administration entirely after his own heart with Lord North at the head of it.



## VI

## INDIA

During the first ten years of King George's reign changes of importance were taking place in India. There were fresh developments in the expansion of the native powers, while the British were making their first experiments as rulers, at first *de facto* and then *de jure*, over great provinces in the dominions of the Mogul. In the twenty years between the appointment of Dupleix as governor of Pondichery, and the capture of Pondichery which signalised the complete overthrow of French power in India, the potentates directly affected by the struggle were the Nizam of the Deccan, his lieutenant the Nawab of the Carnatic, and the Nawab of Bengal. Both the nawabs had become merely puppets in the hands of the British, the nizam's power had become greatly curtailed, and the power of the Marathas, over whom the old nizam had exercised an appreciable dominion, had grown very greatly. It was the first time for centuries that a great Hindu power was getting itself organised in the peninsula, of which much the greater part had habitually been dominated by dynasties of Moham-  
medan conquerors of Turkish or Afghan descent, until the Moguls had won for themselves recognition as lords paramount of the whole.

The Maratha confederacy threatened to convert the Mogul into its puppet and to dominate all India, since the solidarity of the Mogul Empire had become a transparent fiction. But, naturally enough, it did not as yet occur to the Marathas that the weakening of the nizam could be of anything but advantage to them ; that they were to find far more dangerous rivals and antagonists in the British, whose fighting qualities were wholly unknown before Clive's defence of Arcot. From time immemorial the Hindu had turned his eyes to the north-west and the mountain passes of Afghanistan as the region whence attack was to be expected ; and the plan of the Marathas was to dominate the Mogul and carry their sway up to the Indus. In Central India their supremacy was already assured ; and the potentates of Oudh and Bengal stood in awe of them, and generally paid them the tribute or black-mail called *chauth*.

Now the Maratha expansion towards the north-west was a direct challenge to the ruler of Kabul, who looked upon the north-west as his own. In 1761 Ahmed Shah came down from Kabul with a mighty army and smote the Marathas on the favourite battlefield of Paniput, in the Delhi district. The Afghan was a mighty raider, but no organiser of government ; and when he had shattered the Marathas he went back across the hills. But the practical effect of the conflict was to reduce the Maratha power and check its attempts at aggression for some years, and this in itself facilitated the sudden growth of a new power in the south. A Moham-



medan military adventurer of genius, Haidar Naik, afterwards known as Haidar Ali, having obtained the command of the armies of the Hindu state of Mysore, seized the throne for himself in 1762, and so developed the military organisation that in a very short time Mysore was fully a match for any of its native rivals.

It is sufficiently obvious that there was no Empire of India for Clive or any one else to overthrow, except in the sense that various potentates professed to acknowledge the common sovereignty of the Mogul, and gave a colour of legality to their own actions by doing them in his name when they thought it worth while. But this fiction of the Mogul's sovereignty was preserved as carefully by the British as by any one else until the nineteenth century. What the British did during the eighteenth century was merely to establish themselves as one among several territorial powers among whom their intention was to preserve a balance. But because each of the native powers saw in the British the most serious obstacle to its own achievement of ascendancy, one after another they forced contests on the British, whereby their own power was diminished and that of the British was increased until it grew into an acknowledged ascendancy.

When Clive returned to England in 1760 the British were a territorial power *de facto* in Bengal and in the Carnatic, because the nawabs in both those provinces were completely under their control. But *de jure* they were still in possession of nothing but the districts immediately round Madras and Bombay, together with the Sarkars, which they held as a fief from the nizam. The British government at home had not taken charge, the British authority was that of the East India Company. There could be no permanence about an irregular control such as existed in Bengal, where Mir Jafar had to obey the orders of the company's officers forming the council at Calcutta, while the council itself declined all responsibility for the administration. They demanded for themselves privileges and exemptions, accepted the presents which were lavished upon them after the oriental fashion, and practically extorted a good deal more. It was not strange that when Clive's strong mastery was withdrawn the British in Bengal abused their position. The subordinates in a commercial company, suddenly placed in a position of immense actual power without official responsibility, would hardly have been human if they had not abused their position; they had behind them no tradition to live up to, and the temptations were overwhelming.

Mir Jafar found himself unable to meet the demands which were made upon him; the council deposed him, and made his finance minister, Mir Kassim, nawab. Mir Kassim laid his plans to free himself from the British tyranny, which the governor, Vansittart, a person of good intentions, was unable to check. The result was another revolution. Mir Kassim fled to Shujah Daulah, the Nawab of Oudh, and Mir Jafar was set up again. Then once more Shujah Daulah prepared to invade Bengal and subject it to Oudh; but Major Hector Munro, by a brilliant feat of arms



worthy of Clive himself, inflicted upon him a decisive defeat at Buxar, and convinced him of the wisdom of seeking British friendship. Buxar was hardly less important than Plassey in the establishment of the British power in Bengal.

But by this time the directors in England had become impressed with the necessity for putting an end to the misrule which their representatives in India were turning to their private account and not to the benefit of the company. Once more Clive was sent out to India with full powers to take matters in hand and organise the government. He set himself, on his arrival in 1765, to cure the existing evils by drastic measures, and to remove the worst of the causes from which they sprang. The receiving of presents and all private trading by the company's servants were imperatively forbidden; while the profits of the salt monopoly, which had been conceded to the company, were appropriated to the increase of the hitherto despicable salaries of the company's servants. This measure, however, was unfortunately modified by the directors, with the result that the private trading and the receiving of presents revived. The army in Bengal was reorganised, and its control was officially taken over by the company; and, further, the collection and administration of the revenue, what is called the *diwani*, in Bengal, was conferred upon the company by a decree of the Mogul as suzerain, procured by Clive. The position of the British was regulated; they were not only rulers *de facto* but were thenceforth responsible *de jure*. The Diwani of Bengal, the cession of the Sarkars to the British, and the formal separation of the Carnatic from the nizam's jurisdiction, were all obtained under the sanction of the Mogul's authority in August 1765. The British East India Company had become a legally constituted territorial power, and the repudiation of its authority could be accurately represented as an act of rebellion against the Mogul.

Before leaving India Clive also laid down the general principles of foreign policy. There was to be no attempt at the extension of dominion. Oudh was not penalised, but was to be strengthened into a buffer state against Maratha aggression in the north. In like manner the nizam was to be supported against Maratha aggression in the south. At the beginning of 1767 Clive again retired to England. The foundations of British power had been laid, but a working political system still had to be evolved. Chatham's scheme for transferring the sovereignty in England from the company to the Crown came to nothing; but it was impossible for the British nation long to ignore its responsibilities. The next experimental phase is represented by the ministry of Lord North in England and the rule of Warren Hastings in India.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### CLEAVAGE

#### I

#### THE BREACH WIDENS

WITH the formation of Lord North's ministry, King George's victory in parliament was complete. The most definite dividing line between Government and Opposition was fixed by colonial policy, and the Opposition included the whole of the Rockingham connection, together with Burke, the great exponent of Whig political philosophy, Chatham and all those who still revered him, and some even of those whom Charles Townshend had dragged with him more or less reluctantly. The king had secured the solid support of Toryism, of the group who, by whatever name they called themselves, regarded it as their first duty to carry out the king's wishes, and of the bulk of the Bedford Whigs who had brought the quarrel with America to a head and were rigid in their demands for a firm and uncompromising attitude. The king was not possessed of a merely accidental majority in the House of Commons ; between boroughs whose vote was under direct control and constituencies which had been fairly bought, the majority was secure. There was no risk of the Government being defeated in parliament, and practically none that it would be defeated on appealing to the country. And virtually the majority was pledged to carry out the king's wishes.

There were three questions with which North's Government had to deal between 1770 and 1775. The first has already been discussed in connection with Wilkes. The second was India, which for the present we defer ; and the third was the quarrel with the colonies.

The partial repeal of the obnoxious taxes failed entirely to produce the effect intended. Rioting did not cease, and the worst kind of agitators in America found a help to inflaming popular feeling in the "Boston massacre," an affray between the soldiers and the mob in which three of the latter were killed and a half-a-dozen more were wounded. A Boston jury acquitted the soldiers of blame, but when passions have been excited such occurrences acquire a fictitious colour and a fictitious importance. Still, for some time the agitation only simmered ; the colonials, for the most part, contented themselves with refusing to drink tea. Then in 1772 the royal schooner *Gaspee*, engaged on preventive service, was decoyed into



shallows, where she grounded and was then boarded and burnt ; nor could any information be obtained as to the perpetrators. The resistance to the importation of the boycotted goods was more carefully organised ; the Americans who supported the home government were subjected to a persistent persecution. Ship loads of tea when they arrived at American ports, if disembarked at all, found no purchasers, and for the most part the ships sailed away again without unloading. At the end of 1773 such a consignment of the East India Company's tea arrived in Boston harbour. The consignees were the sons of the British Governor, Hutchinson. Hutchinson forbade the ships to sail till they had paid the duties ; the Bostonians refused to allow the tea to be landed. One evening, after a great public meeting, a party of pretended Red Indians boarded the tea ships in the presence of an applauding multitude which watched operations from the shore, and emptied the tea chests into the sea. No one revealed the identity of the "Indians" ; the entire city of Boston shared the responsibility.

Meanwhile public sentiment had been inflamed on both sides of the Atlantic by the publication of certain letters written to a private correspondent in London by Hutchinson the Governor and Oliver the Chief Justice of Massachusetts. Both men were honest supporters of the British government, and expressed their opinions with the natural freedom of private letters. Those letters, by some means unknown, fell into the hands of Benjamin Franklin, who was in London as agent for several of the colonies. In America the publication infuriated the colonials against the writers of the letters, while in England it infuriated most people against the men responsible for an entirely unjustifiable divulgence of a private correspondence. A bitter attack was made upon Franklin, which he never forgave. Hitherto he had at any rate believed in the possibility of an honourable adjustment ; henceforth he was to be numbered amongst the irreconcilables. The letter incident and the Boston "tea-party" between them had an exasperating effect, which perhaps destroyed the last chance of a peaceful solution.

For now the British Government, with British sentiment behind it, resolved upon penal measures directed against Massachusetts. Boston harbour was closed, the seat of the government was removed from Boston to Salem, the constitution was suspended ; the venue for trials of officers of the Crown on capital charges was transferred to England, and troops were ordered to be quartered upon the town, which was required to pay compensation to the East India Company for the tea destroyed.

At the same moment an entirely admirable Act was passed for the government of Canada. It emanated not from the brains of George's ministers, but from the statesmanship of Sir Guy Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester, who had for some years been Governor of Canada. While the Quebec Act extended the boundaries of Canada, it secured for the Roman Catholics complete freedom of worship and preserved their endow-



ments, nine-tenths of the Canadians being of the religion which was proscribed in Ireland and in Great Britain. It is an extraordinary paradox that Chatham opposed, while King George supported, this surprisingly liberal measure. But, further, the government was placed in the hands of a Governor and a Legislative Council of Crown nominees, the right of taxation was expressly reserved to the parliament of Great Britain, and the English Criminal Law was introduced while the old French Civil Law was retained. The religious and social institutions of the French population were thus fully protected, and they had no desire for an extension to them of political rights which they had never possessed under the French flag. Nevertheless this excellent measure was an additional source of irritation to their neighbours in British colonies. To the New Englanders in particular, with their Puritan tradition, and to the Virginians with their Anglican Cavalier tradition, the latitude allowed to the Romanists was a scandal; while the political constitution was looked upon as ominous of what the British Government intended to impose upon the old British colonies.

Again the assemblies of the thirteen colonies, or of twelve of them, since the youngest, Georgia, did not yet associate itself with the rest, sent delegates to a general "Continental Congress," which met at Philadelphia in September (1774). In that Congress, although there were as yet few who had brought themselves to welcome the idea of separation, the dominant voices were those of the men who had already made up their minds to work for that object, and with them lay the skill of political organisation. The Congress demanded the repeal of the whole series of obnoxious Acts, endorsed a policy of something more than passive resistance to the carrying out of the laws imposed by the British parliament, sanctioned the principle of the boycott, drew up a new Declaration of Rights, and addressed a petition to the king, and what may be called an open letter to the people of England. They claimed, in short, a return to the position as it was before 1763; but at the same time they expressly repudiated the idea that they desired separation. Congress voted by states, and the states voted solidly together with the exception of New York. It need hardly be remarked, however, that the congress had no legal powers, the sanction for its authority residing only in the Assemblies of the several states.

Massachusetts, which had taken the lead in the agitation and had been singled out for punishment, took the lead also in preparation for armed resistance. The new governor and commander-in-chief, General Gage, refused to summon the Assembly of the province; nevertheless it was elected and met, and was obeyed precisely as if it had been a legal body. Volunteer corps were organised and drilled, and military stores were collected. Gage, who had four British regiments at his disposal, for the most part massed in Boston, urged the home government to send him more troops. He did not get his troops, and North's Government made a belated offer which was intended to be conciliatory—the offer to exempt

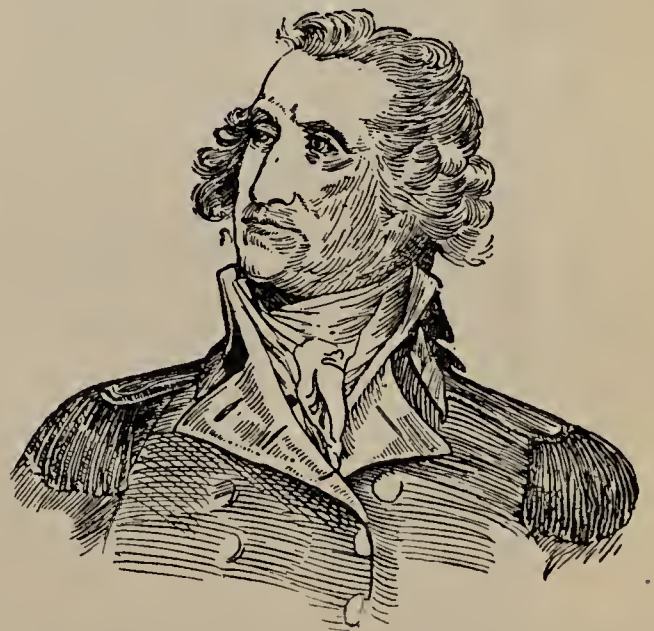


from taxation any colony which elected to make such a contribution of its own to the Imperial Exchequer as satisfied the Imperial parliament. At this stage the proposal was worse than useless, and it was accompanied by other retaliatory measures against the colonists, closing American ports, excluding all American trade, and voting an increase of troops for Boston. It was in vain for Burke, Chatham, and the Rockinghams to present the case for the colonies to parliament. They were completely out-voted, and the majority in parliament was supported by the great body of popular opinion.

## II

### FROM LEXINGTON TO SARATOGA

The War of American Independence was opened by the skirmish of Lexington on April 18, 1775. General Gage sent a party of soldiers to seize and destroy military stores which were being collected at Concord, eighteen miles from Boston. The immediate purpose was accomplished more or less successfully, but the troops were attacked on the march by the Massachusetts militia, and had sufficiently the worse in the encounter to encourage the colonials in the conviction that the volunteers could hold their own against the regulars. Also it was felt that matters had now been fairly brought to the arbitrament of the sword. The Massachusetts men began to muster in force, Gage's regiments were for the time shut up in Boston, and a party of insurgents under Ethan Allen captured the fort of Ticonderoga. Before the end of May two thousand men were added to the British force in Boston; and, on the other hand, the Congress at Philadelphia, which was now accepted as the common directing authority of the colonists, took measures for raising a force of fifteen thousand men, and nominated as commander-in-chief George Washington, a highly respected landowner of Virginia, who had served with credit as a young man in Braddock's day, and whose force of character had won for him the confidence of Congress.



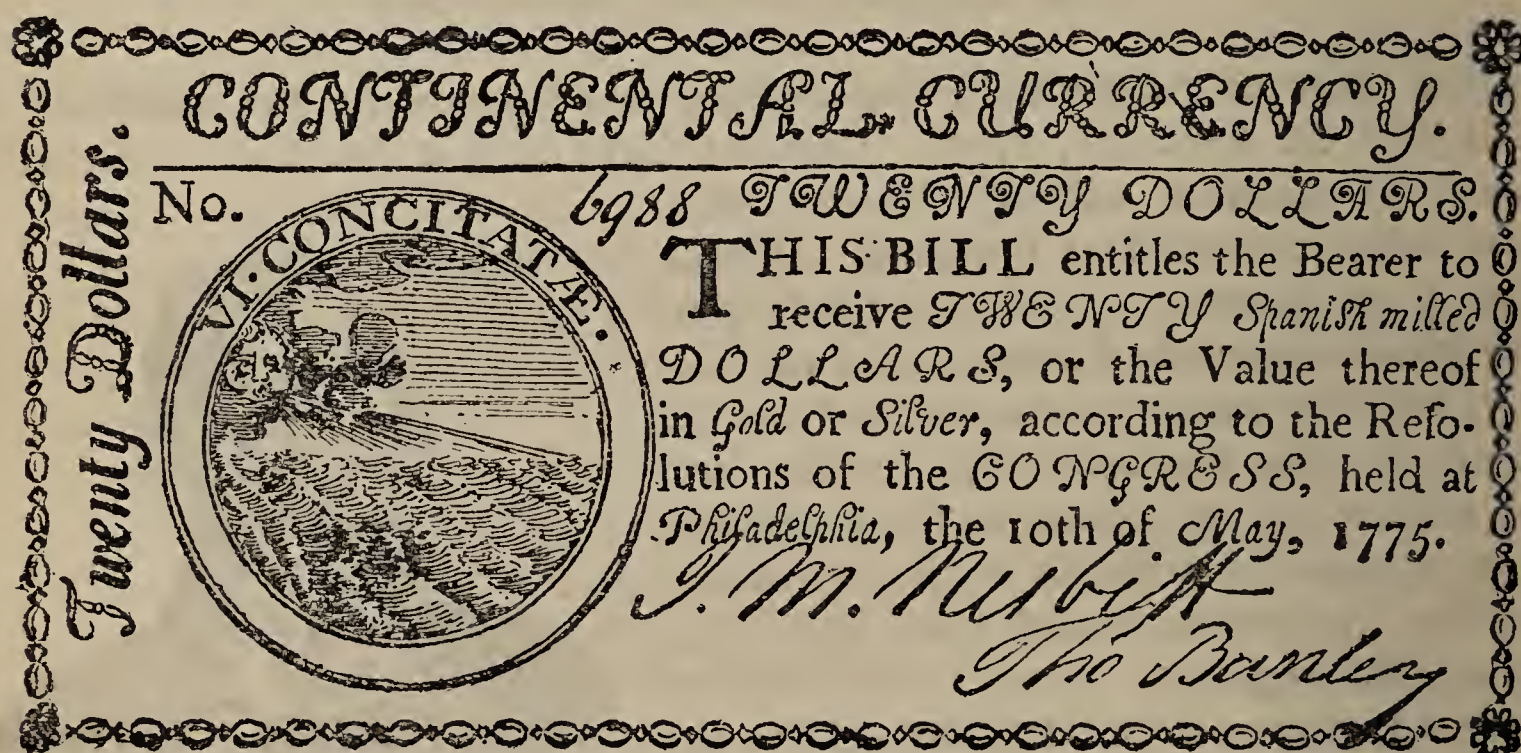
George Washington.  
[After the painting by Trumbull.]

Then on June 17th occurred the first important engagement. An American column occupied a height called Breed's Hill (not the neighbouring Bunker Hill itself) to the north of Boston, from which they could command the British quarters. A strong British column only succeeded



in driving them out after being twice repulsed and at the cost of heavy losses. The battle of Bunker Hill or Bunker's Hill was in actual fact a British victory ; but it was won so hardly and in such circumstances as to be a real moral victory for the colonials ; because, on a much larger scale than at Lexington, they had faced the regulars and inflicted punishment much more severe than they had suffered.

The colonials were tolerably unanimous in their determination to fight, but they were without military discipline, without established organisation, badly supplied with stores, and very short of money. The British, on the other hand, had complete command of the sea, officers of experience, regular troops, and abundant resources. But they remained consistently inert, apparently under the conviction that the resistance of the Americans would perish of sheer inanition. General Sir William Howe took the



An American 20 dollar bill dated prior to the Declaration of Independence.

place of Gage as commander of the forces ; his brother Admiral Lord Howe was in command of the fleet. But the fleet was not allowed to do anything, and General Howe preferred to do nothing. His army was concentrated in Boston, while Washington's was concentrated outside. Elsewhere, the governors of the southern colonies had to take refuge in British ships, which were unassailable, though in the circumstances useless for purposes of offence. Washington spent the winter in a long effort to organise and instil discipline into an army which was only held together at all with the utmost difficulty.

Active operations were restricted to an attempt on the part of the Americans to attach Canada to the rebellion. The first force of invaders led by Montgomery was on the whole favourably received by the French, and Montreal was captured. But the most persistent defect of the American armies immediately made itself felt. The men only enlisted for short terms, and the moment their time was up they went off home, much after the





PART OF A PANORAMIC VIEW OF BOSTON AND THE COUNTRY ROUND AT THE TIME  
OF THE BATTLE OF BUNKER'S HILL, 1775

Taken from the original water-colour drawing made by a Lieutenant of the British army directly after the battle. The upper part looks towards Cambridge; the lower shows, on the right, the ruins of Charlestown and Bunker's Hill (4). In the foreground is a part of North Boston.







fashion of their Saxon ancestors a thousand years before. Meanwhile Benedict Arnold had been despatched against Quebec, where he arrived in December with a body of troops ragged, barefoot, half-starved. When the remnant from Montreal joined them the whole body barely numbered a thousand. Such a force had no possible chance of capturing Quebec. An attempt to storm the place was repulsed with heavy loss and Montgomery himself was killed. For some three months the besiegers hung on with a somewhat fantastic heroism which refused to recognise impossibilities. The wavering attitude of the French Canadians turned into one of hostility to the Americans, the siege was at last raised in March, and thenceforward Canadian loyalty to the Crown was never in doubt.

On the other hand, in the same month, March, General Howe made up his mind that Boston was a bad military centre for his purposes, so he put his troops on board ship and sailed for Halifax, which became his headquarters for the time. Such was the ignominious position twelve months after the outbreak of the war. The British, with complete command of the sea, with nothing to check the supply of reinforcements, with no foreign complications on hand to distract them, had retired from their one real foothold in the thirteen colonies in the face of an untrained army which was short of guns and ammunition, and was only preserved from dissolving by the invincible patience and firmness of its great chief; a chief who was himself the object of the perpetual attacks of jealousy, at the same time that the conditions in which he was placed forced upon him a rigour of conduct which inevitably made him unpopular, while they prohibited the active offensive by which popularity might have been won. The inefficiency shown by the British administration was almost without a parallel except during the first months of the Seven Years' War. The government had entered on a battle with the colonists for which the only possible justification was an iron resolve to conquer unmistakably and decisively. Right or wrong, such a programme would have been intelligible, and there should have been no sort of difficulty in destroying open resistance in the field. But no effort was made at conquest, apparently on the assumption that conquest would come of itself. The actual effect was to stiffen in the Americans the conviction that the British might be beaten and the determination to beat them.

Month by month the idea of separation took firmer root; the men who had begun with a conscientious desire to be content with a return to the old system were learning to believe that the old system had become impossible and that complete separation must be their goal. The new feeling at last found decisive expression in the Declaration of Independence issued by the Continental Congress on July 4th, 1776. Eighteen months earlier Congress had indignantly repudiated the charge that independence was desired; now the claim for independence was uncompromisingly asserted. As before, New York was the one state which declined to go with the rest. The Declaration, with its accompanying



resolutions in favour of seeking foreign alliances, at once and finally put reconciliation out of the question.

It was correctly anticipated that the British would return to the attack and would make New York their objective. Thither therefore Washington had removed his force after the British evacuation of Boston. At the close of June Lord Howe returned with a fleet and occupied Staten Island. Some little time elapsed before the resumption of active hostilities; it was occupied in fruitless efforts to arrive at a basis of negotiation, and in proclamations on the one side offering free pardon to all who should come in and on the other offering grants of land to the German mercenaries serving with the British force if they would enroll themselves as American

citizens. The renewal of fighting at the end of August soon brought New York completely into the hands of the British, and by the end of November Washington was forced to fall back across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. Sir Guy Carleton descended from Canada and

The first twenty-four signatures to the Declaration that the "United Colonies" of America "are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States."

occupied Crown Point near Ticonderoga, while another detachment from New York was threatening the New England States. But Howe was satisfied with what he had accomplished and relapsed into his normal inaction.

Congress, on the other hand, did something to strengthen Washington's hands by ordering the enlistment of the troops for the period of the war, instead of for the short terms which had kept the armies in a state of perpetually recurring dissolution. Moreover, it declined to listen to the chorus of complaints which arose from officers who were jealous of Washington and dissatisfied with their own appointments, or which were born of a general tendency to depreciate a commander who was admirably fulfilling the most thankless of all tasks, that of preserving in being an army which was quite unfit to adopt the vigorous offensive which was expected of it. Congress retained its confidence in Washington, and answered the complaints by enlarging his authority. Washington himself found his opportunity that winter, crossed the Delaware on the ice, cut up the British outpost at Trenton, and cleared the western part of New Jersey, in which he remained established. In the north Carleton was unable to make further progress and his command was transferred to Burgoyne.



No active movements were set on foot until the next midsummer. The campaign was designed with the object of cutting off the New England States. Burgoyne was to descend with the Northern force along the line of the Hudson River, while a column marched from New York to effect a junction. Washington's army would then be completely cut off from the Northern States, while the British would be able to sweep down upon him in irresistible force. It should have been Howe's business to despatch a strong column to join hands with Burgoyne, keeping at New York a sufficient body to hold Washington himself in check. But instead of carrying out this plan he directed his energies to the capture of Philadelphia, to which he appears to have attached an extravagant importance. Therefore, when Clinton ought to have been marching to join Burgoyne, he was detained at New York, whence Howe had carried off the bulk of the troops by sea to the Chesapeake to turn Washington's position and fall upon Philadelphia. Howe succeeded in his object. He was met by Washington at Brandywine Creek, defeated him, occupied Philadelphia, and again beat him at German's Town. The American commander had to fall back to Valley Forge, where for a long time his position remained exceedingly precarious.

But Howe's move upon Philadelphia ruined the plan of the Northern campaign. Clinton could not move to join Burgoyne ; and the Northern American army under Gates, reinforced by troops spared at great risk by Washington, soon outnumbered Burgoyne's force and manœuvred him into a position at Saratoga, where he found himself with no alternative to the surrender of his whole army. Clinton, who had made a struggle to push up to his assistance, was obliged to return to New York. The North, instead of being secured by the British, was entirely lost to them, and was in the hands of the victorious Americans, a matter of more decisive import than the occupation of Philadelphia or the difficult situation of George Washington's army at Valley Forge.

### III

#### FRANCE INTERVENES

The surrender at Saratoga had results much more far-reaching than the mere immediate change in the military situation on the American Continent. There was nothing in itself irretrievable about the disaster. A Chatham, bent on a vigorous prosecution of the war, would have found troops and officers numerous enough and capable enough to vanquish the Americans in the field in the simple duel. But after Saratoga the war ceased to be a duel. It became a struggle between Great Britain and a group of combatants who joined together for her destruction. She had sown the wind in the long years of incompetent and wrong-headed administration ; now she



was to reap the whirlwind. The Peace of Paris had left her with no friend in Europe and with one implacable foe. That foe, France, had at least endeavoured to lay to heart one great lesson of the Seven Years' War, and had been steadily and persistently building up a fleet, while Britain had been neglecting both her naval and her military organisation. France had been drawing closer her union with Spain, and had been mollifying rather than exacerbating old animosities on the Continent. She desired nothing better than an opportunity of striking a blow at the rival who had defeated her.

But so far France had had no shadow of excuse for intervention. Moreover, at the outset her shrewd minister Turgot had perceived that in any event Great Britain was likely to suffer from the war so severely that it would not be worth while for France to intervene even if she could afford to do so, which Turgot very well knew she could not. French finances had been reduced to chaos ; Turgot was striving to bring them into something like order, and he knew that economy was imperative. But Turgot's tenure of power was brief ; his financial methods subjected the privileged classes to taxation, which they resented, and he was driven into retirement. The direction of foreign affairs was in the hands of Vergennes. Vergennes was inclined to an aggressive policy, although it was restricted to a secret encouragement of the American rebellion. International amenities forbade the immediate recognition of the American States as an independent nation ; but their agents, despatched to Paris after the Declaration of Independence, were welcomed by Parisian society, fêted, and patronised in a fashion which left no room for doubt that participation in the war would be exceedingly popular in France. The French court and French society were as yet unconscious that they were playing on the crater of a volcano. The "rights of a man" were in fashion, because from the point of view of Society they were entirely visionary and impossible in France itself. A theoretical enthusiasm for popular liberties could be comfortably enjoyed where privilege felt itself to be perfectly secure. The aristocrats had no suspicion that while they were encouraging revolution in America they were fomenting revolution at home.

France indeed could expect no direct benefit to herself from the American War ; it was enough that she thirsted for humiliation and disaster to fall upon the British.

But Saratoga gave an opening, an excuse for recognising the independence of the colonies, although it was tolerably obvious that such a recognition would involve war. It was not so easy for France to draw Spain in her wake ; for Spain was a great colonial power, and if the British colonies asserted their independence successfully, it was exceedingly probable that the Spanish colonies would follow the British example. Still Spain might hope that if she joined France and the British colonies in open hostilities she might achieve not only the gratification of revenge, but tangible results in the recovery of Gibraltar and Minorca. And the prospects were infinitely better than they had been when she was last



tempted to join with France in 1761. Then, Great Britain was advancing on the full tide of victory, and her fleets swept the seas unchallenged. Then, France was already exhausted by a war in which she had suffered a series of disastrous losses, besides being involved in the Prussian complication. Now, Britain stood entirely alone, a house divided against itself, engaged in a struggle with her own colonies in which it was exceedingly doubtful whether she could achieve success, while her fleet had been allowed to lose its old predominance, whereas that of France had been carefully nursed and expanded.

It was immediately realised in England that the disaster of Saratoga would probably involve her in another struggle for life against the combined Bourbons. Before the end of the year France had given private assurances to the American commissioners in Paris that the independence of the colonies would be formally recognised, and that they would receive open support ; although it was not till the following March that the formal treaty was notified in London. But the facts could not be altogether concealed, and the threatened danger only roused British doggedness to the utmost. Whatever else happened, the Bourbons should be defied and fought to the last gasp. King George was even ready to drop the American contest altogether in order to concentrate on the French war. Bills were introduced and passed to offer the colonists everything that they had demanded before the outbreak of the war. North himself urged the king to allow him to resign and to call Chatham to the leadership.

But Chatham's day was over ; even if George could have brought himself to a reconciliation, the thing was no longer possible. He was carried down to the House for the last time in order to insist that Britain should never consent to a separation, and should never yield to the Bourbons. His speech was an answer to the Duke of Richmond's motion, on behalf of the Rockinghams, that all fleets and armies should be withdrawn from America ; it was a dying effort. His suffering and exhaustion were evident, his words often barely audible. Richmond replied. Chatham endeavoured once more to rise and speak, but his strength failed him, and he fell back in a fit, while a great awe fell upon the House. This was Chatham's last utterance, though a month passed before the spirit passed from the worn-out frame. So ended the life of the great patriot, whom all men, friends and foes alike, recognised as the grandest figure of his time.

The scene took place on the 7th April, three weeks after the announcement of the French treaty. North's proposals had come far too late, and Congress refused to treat upon any terms except recognition of the complete independence of America. It had already laid before the colonies its proposals for a scheme of confederation, which were adopted by eight of the states in the following July ; the rest only came in by slow degrees. Though the vain attempts at negotiation were not finally abandoned until October, the war had already entered upon its second phase when the French fleet sailed from Toulon in April.



## IV

## THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE

The force which had captured Philadelphia remained there through the winter, while Washington had the usual difficulty in keeping his troops together at Valley Forge. Howe was recalled, and the chief command was given to Clinton in New York ; but with the certainty of French intervention the General could not afford to keep his forces divided. The skill of Admiral Howe successfully carried the troops which had occupied Philadelphia back to New York before the superior French fleet arrived in American waters. The French admiral, D'Estaing, had accomplished his voyage unimpeded. It is very significant of the change which had taken place in the naval situation, that, although this fleet from Toulon was larger than that under Howe's command, the British fleet in home waters could not spare sufficient strength to interfere with it, and was only able to fight a drawn battle with a second French fleet, off Ushant, at the end of July. The actual preponderance was with the French rather than with the British ; it was ultimately to be restored to the British only because of their superior seamanship and their superior leading. It may be confidently affirmed that if Howe and D'Estaing had changed places the French fleet would have reached the mouth of the Hudson before the British fleet had got the Philadelphia force back to New York, and New York would have been very seriously in danger of falling.

It is a curious feature of almost all the naval operations throughout the war that the French, although habitually in superior force, always avoided battle, and missed repeated opportunities of crushing smaller British squadrons, while the British commanders were constantly prepared to challenge fleets larger than their own. Thus D'Estaing did not venture to attack Howe in the Hudson, but drew off to the North, and at the end of the year betook himself to the West Indies, which were to be the main scene of the operations of the rival fleets. At the same time Clinton had to send away a large force from New York to be convoyed by Admiral Hotham to Barbadoes. This would still have left the British commander with a sufficient force to undertake operations against Washington, since he was no longer menaced by a French fleet ; but he was reduced to inaction by orders to despatch another body of troops to the southern colonies under the command of Cornwallis. Cornwallis was a capable soldier, but he could only overrun the country without securing any grip on it, while for once Washington passed the winter in comparative security. In fact, when the spring came, his main difficulty lay in restraining Congress from insisting on sending another expedition to Canada. Washington at least was well aware that the British had blundered in diffusing their energies



over an extended area, and he had no mind to follow their example. Moreover, however useful it might have been at an earlier stage to involve Canada in the struggle against Great Britain, now that the Americans were fighting in alliance with France he had no inclination to risk making Canada the reward of French assistance, and renewing the menace of French rivalry which had been removed by the Seven Years' War.

Neither side then made any material progress in the land operations ; for while Clinton could not attack Washington, Washington could not



The West Indies, the scene of English and French naval operations 1778-1779.

attack him in New York, especially as the absence of D'Estaing still left the British in command of the communications by sea. And in the West Indies, while the French amused themselves by capturing islands which they were perfectly certain to lose again the moment the British should acquire a naval predominance, and while for the sake of capturing these islands they neglected opportunities of dealing damaging blows to the British squadrons, the British commanders directed their captures only to points of strategical value, such as Santa Lucia.

For eighteen months, then, after the French intervention, no striking successes fell to either party. On the other hand, in the summer of 1779



Spain too declared war. Her effective share in the operations was for some time limited to the siege of Gibraltar, but the British fleet was now heavily outnumbered. There was no British Mediterranean force to raise the siege of Gibraltar. The French fleet in the West Indies was larger than the British; a combined Franco-Spanish fleet which made a great naval demonstration in the British channel was very much larger than the British Channel Fleet for defence, though the enemy were satisfied with demonstrating and accomplished nothing further. It was well for the British that co-operation between allied navies offers an even more difficult problem than co-operation between allied armies. Spain made Gibraltar her objective, the French made the West Indies theirs. No attempt was made to concentrate for the purpose of crushing the British Navy in detail.

The result was that by the summer of 1780 the destruction of Great



Gibraltar before the great siege of 1780.

[From a print by Coquart ]

Britain was no nearer. In the northern theatre of war neither Washington nor Clinton could attempt a decisive movement. In the southern theatre Cornwallis had practically put an end to open resistance, though it was clear that upon any withdrawal of forces from that region the insurgents would at once take the field again; but the communication by sea between the northern and southern divisions of the British was uninterrupted. Both French and British had reinforced the squadrons in the West Indies; the French, commanded by Guichen, was still in greater force, but the British Admiral Rodney, on his way out, had thrown reliefs into Gibraltar and had caught two Spanish squadrons separately, capturing one and destroying the other. In July Washington was reinforced by a strong contingent of French troops under Rochambeau and Lafayette. The substantial addition to his forces was indubitably of great value to the American commander, but did not diminish his personal difficulties, since the Americans were exceedingly jealous of the Frenchmen, and all Washington's diplomacy was constantly needed to prevent an open rupture.



During the ensuing twelve months Britain added yet one more to the circle of her maritime foes by declaring war upon Holland, because Holland joined the Armed Neutrality, a league of the Baltic Powers formed in this year to resist the doctrines of international maritime law maintained by Great Britain, which turned mainly upon the relative rights of belligerents and neutrals. The Dutch, however, being isolated, could not effectively co-operate with the other enemies of Great Britain. The main results were that Negapatam and Trincomali, two Dutch stations in India and Ceylon, passed into the hands of the British, and there was one obstinate sea-fight off the Dogger Bank (August 1701), in which British and Dutch fought each other with the old grim equality of stubbornness ; but though neither side could claim a decisive victory, the Dutch fleet was placed practically *hors de combat*.

An incident of the autumn was the treason of Benedict Arnold, the American commander who had made the desperate attempt to capture Quebec in the first year of the war. His correspondence with Clinton was discovered. Arnold made his escape ; but a young British officer, Major André, who was captured with letters of Arnold concealed on his person, was hanged as a spy in strict accordance with military law, and his fate aroused such deep public sympathy that a monument was erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey, whither his remains were brought for burial many years later. But the main importance of the twelve months after the midsummer of 1780 lay in the southern theatre, where Cornwallis set out with the object of effecting a junction with the northern force. The apparent subjection of the south was illusory. As Cornwallis progressed from Georgia through the Carolinas there was a series of engagements ; Cornwallis was repeatedly in danger of having his communications with the sea cut off ; as he moved northward, the detachments left behind to keep the country under control were cooped up in Savannah, Charlestown, and Wilmington ; and in August 1781 he was obliged to throw himself into Yorktown at the mouth of the Chesapeake.

Almost immediately there followed the decisive blow, so far as the American War was concerned. In April the French Admiral, De Grasse, arrived in the West Indies with twenty-one ships of the line. No corresponding reinforcements came from England, which had been obliged to concentrate on the relief of Gibraltar, strenuously blockaded and periodically bombarded by the Spaniards. Hitherto the French squadron in the North American waters had not been strong enough to sever the communications between New York and the South. But now at last the opportunity presented itself for crushing one of the two British divisions. By a movement concerted with De Grasse, Washington, having convinced Clinton that he was preparing for a concentrated attack on New York itself, suddenly descended instead upon Yorktown. De Grasse sailed in force from the West Indies for the Chesapeake, for once with a real justification for avoiding an engagement even with an inferior British squadron. The



combined French fleet in the Chesapeake greatly outnumbered the combined British squadrons, which attacked it but without success ; Yorktown was completely cut off from all assistance, and in October Cornwallis was obliged to surrender. With the capture of Yorktown American independence was no longer a doubtful issue. The question was rather whether Britain herself would survive. If De Grasse had failed to enter the Chesapeake it is conceivable that the American army would have broken up completely ; for if Yorktown had received the relief which was despatched too late from New York, Cornwallis might have inflicted a blow from which it would have been extremely difficult to recover. On this single occasion

it can at least be maintained that the French commander was right in staking everything not upon the disabling of the enemy's fleet, but on securing the immediate capture of a vitally important post. The Americans owed their victory to his action, though it had become as impossible for Britain to retain her grip of the colonies as it had been in old days for the Plantagenet to keep his grip on Scotland.

But France had not yet paid her share of the price for America's victory. The next year, 1782, witnessed the final grapple between Britain and the Bourbons. In February Minorca was lost ; in September a last overwhelming attack was planned upon Gibraltar. But the really decisive engagement had already been fought in April. De Grasse, after leaving Yorktown, had again neglected opportunities of bringing the smaller British squadrons in the West Indies to an engagement which ought to have meant their an-

nihilation. In February Rodney returned thither with a new squadron, which gave the British a slight superiority in numbers ; but a Spanish fleet was intended to form a junction with De Grasse, and if that junction were effected the allied fleet would have more than twice as many ships of the line as the British. The British fleet lay at Santa Lucia and the French fleet at Martinique, when De Grasse set sail for the point of rendezvous in Hayti and Rodney started in pursuit. As the two fleets passed Dominica the French admiral again missed an opportunity. It was Rodney's business at all costs to prevent the junction ; it was De Grasse's business at almost any cost to effect it. The pursuing British van came up with the French fleet, while the rear still lay becalmed under the lee of Dominica. Apparently De Grasse might have brought his whole fleet to bear upon the van, and if he had done so, he having the advantage of the wind, the British must have been seriously crippled. He engaged, however, with only a part of his fleet in order to ensure the escape of a convoy, and



An American General.

[From Barnard's "History," 1790.]



then proceeded on his way. But four days later the British again caught him up before he was clear of the group of islands called The Saints. The victory was won by the manœuvre which is called breaking the line, the British ships piercing the French line at two points, throwing it into complete disorder, with the rear unable to come to the aid of the van, and capturing five ships of the line, including the flagship, which carried De Grasse himself. This manœuvre was not part of Rodney's own plan of action, but was a happy inspiration due to a change of wind while the two fleets were running past each other on opposite tacks; and it is held that if Rodney had made full use of his victory he ought to have annihilated the French fleet. But as it was he made the junction with the Spaniards impossible, and secured a quite decisive ascendancy in the West Indian waters.

In September the last furious attack upon Gibraltar was repulsed by the indomitable valour of the besieged, and Sir George Elliott's magnificent defence was followed by a skilful relief effect by Lord Howe. There was no more fear that Gibraltar would be taken. There remains only one belated phase of the war to be dealt with in the account of Indian affairs, to which we shall turn immediately.

After the winter of 1781 no one in England believed that it would be possible to refuse the American demand for independence. After Rodney's victory in the West Indies, and the demonstration that Gibraltar was impregnable, the Bourbon Powers could no longer feel any confidence that a continuation of the war would bring them any advantage. As for the British, they had already suffered so severely that they were ready both to concede American independence and to make peace with the Bourbons upon honourable terms. The preliminaries of peace were agreed upon by all the parties at the beginning of 1783, though the definitive Treaty of Versailles was not signed till the following September. The conclusion of the war brought no very serious changes other than the separation of the thirteen colonies from the mother country and their formation into the United States. In effect there was a general restoration of conquests, except for the retention of Minorca and Florida by Spain.



Admiral Sir George Rodney.  
[From the portrait by Reynolds.]



## V

## WARREN HASTINGS IN INDIA

While King George's government was forcing on the rupture with the colonies in America, while the British nation was fighting its own offspring, and losing the major portion of its empire in the Western Hemisphere, and finally was struggling desperately to preserve its own existence as the premier maritime Power, events of hardly less importance were fixing firmly the foundations of British dominion in India. Almost Warren Hastings might have said, "Alone I did it." The achievement was his, for almost without exception his colleagues thwarted and counteracted him at every turn, and half of the difficulties which were not imposed upon him by their actual malice were the outcome of the blundering stupidity of authorities who acted without reference to him. He had no voice in the selection of the colleagues or the authorities who thwarted him. The directors from home sent him admirable moral instructions, but instead of providing means for carrying them out, clamoured for handsome profits. He was forced into wars with the country powers, while his own country could spare neither ships nor troops to help him. And in the face of these enormous difficulties he preserved the British power and left it on a footing which enabled his successors to secure a decisive ascendancy.

Clive did much to reduce the evils which had followed naturally upon the sudden acquisition of a vast irresponsible power by a trading company. But he could not create an imperial system single-handed. The company's servants still evaded their responsibilities, still utilised their opportunities to make improper profits, and still neglected to make it their first aim to learn how the new territories ought to be governed. There was still no central British authority in India. The three Presidencies of Madras, Bengal, and Bombay were governed each by its own governor and council, and by land no one of them could even communicate with another except across Maratha territory.

In 1772 Warren Hastings, then acting as second official in Madras, was made Governor of Bengal, where before Clive's last visit to India he had been honourably distinguished by his efforts to support Vansittart in checking the general misrule. It was not till two years later that the Governor of Bengal was elevated into the position of Governor-General of the British dominions in India. An account of the career of Warren Hastings must still to a very large extent take the form of a defence, because the literary forces which were arrayed to denounce him during the best part of a century were so powerful and were applied with such picturesque effect as to produce the almost indelible but exceedingly misleading impression of an



able but unscrupulous and tyrannical governor, who achieved his ends very largely by grossly iniquitous methods.

The first instance is that of the Rohilla war which took place while he was only Governor of Bengal. Macaulay's exceedingly picturesque account, given in his essay on Warren Hastings, is a quite astonishing distortion of demonstrable truth. Just before the outbreak of hostilities between French and British, about the time when Nadir Shah swept over the north-west of India and sacked Delhi, a band of Mohammedan Afghans called the Rohillas made themselves masters of the territory lying on the north-western frontier of the province of Oudh. In 1770 some forty thousand Rohillas dominated the very much larger Hindu population in occupation of the soil. They were lords there by right of conquest and nothing else; they had been there for considerably less than half a century. They were a fighting race, and they rendered considerable service to Ahmed Shah when he smote the Marathas at Paniput. The Marathas wanted to punish them; they appealed to the wazir of Oudh for defence against the Marathas, and the wazir, counting them a valuable buffer against Maratha aggression, promised to defend them in consideration of a large indemnity.

The Rohillas did not pay the indemnity, and the wazir believed, or pretended to believe, that they were arranging a compact with the Marathas for the partition of Oudh. He put the case to Hastings that the expulsion of the Rohillas and the annexation of Rohilkhand to Oudh were necessary for the preservation of Oudh against an alliance between Marathas and Rohillas. And he invited Hastings to participate by lending him troops, for which assistance substantial payment would be made. The preservation of Oudh was an essential feature of the policy laid down by Clive and adopted by Hastings, who acceded to Shujah Daulah's proposals and sent a force to help in the suppression of the Rohillas. Experience had not yet taught the necessity of stipulating that British assistance should not be given unless the operations of war were carried on under British control. The wazir conducted the war upon oriental principles, in spite of protests from the British commander; but the suggestion that Hastings lent himself to an act of wanton aggression by a greedy and cruel potentate against an idyllic community for the sake of a bribe is preposterously remote from the fact.

Meanwhile, Government at home had awakened to the fact that the British nation must accept some share of responsibility for the government of India. A commission of inquiry gave an opening for a virulent attack upon Clive in parliament, but, to the credit of the country, the House rejected a proposed vote of censure, and affirmed instead that Clive had rendered great services to the state. But while parliament exonerated the man to whom the country owed so much, it applied itself also to a singular experiment in constitution making. It devised for India the system of Lord North's Regulating Act. The Governor of Bengal was to be Governor-General of India; the governors of the other two Presidencies being sub-



ordinate. But he was to have a nominated council consisting of four members besides himself. The votes of the five members of council were of equal force, the Governor-General having a casting vote only when the voting was otherwise equal. Also there was to be a High Court of Justice consisting of four judges, who were to be responsible not to the Government of India but to the Crown. Three members of the new council were sent out from England, who apparently regarded themselves as a committee appointed for the express purpose of overriding the will of the Governor-General in every particular. It would hardly have been possible to devise a scheme more hopelessly impracticable. Moreover, the Government of India was itself in the long run responsible to the management of the East India Company in London, which was vested in two bodies, the court of directors and the court of proprietors or large shareholders.

From the time of their arrival in India at the end of 1774 the three members of the council, Francis, Clavering, and Monson, commonly known as the Triumvirate, set themselves to reverse whatever could be reversed in the past doings of Hastings, and to thwart his actions in the present. To this strife between the Governor-General and his council belongs an incident too notorious to be passed over. The Triumvirate deliberately set themselves to procure evidence which could be used for a formal attack upon Hastings. An instrument upon whom they relied was a high-caste Brahmin, Nanda Kumar, whose name has been popularised as Nuncomar. Nuncomar was an adept at the fabrication of evidence, and Hastings was preparing to indict him for conspiracy when he was relieved from the necessity for further action. The new High Court of Justice presented an opportunity to an old enemy of Nuncomar, one Mohun Persad, who charged him before the court with forgery. The court administered English law, and forgery under English law was a capital offence. The court, after a long and entirely fair examination, found Nuncomar guilty and condemned him to death. They could have done nothing else. But the incident has been ingeniously perverted so as to represent Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice, as a kind of Judge Jeffreys, and the trial itself as in effect a conspiracy for the protection of Hastings and the destruction of Nuncomar. It would be nearer the truth to say that a conspiracy against Hastings was thwarted by the fortunate accident that Nuncomar had exposed himself to destruction at the hands of a private enemy.

Meanwhile, however, Bombay had chosen to assert itself, with disastrous results. A posthumous child was born to the late peishwa of Puna. But before the child's birth the functions of the peishwaship were discharged by a kinsman, Ragonath Rao, or Ragoba, who wished to remain peishwa ; but the adherents of the infant were too strong for him. The other chiefs of the Maratha confederacy, Sindhia, Holkar, the Gaekwar and the Bhonsla (three of these titles are born by hereditary princes to the present day), were in no haste to commit themselves. Ragoba appealed to the authorities at Bombay to support his cause, for which support they





India and the British Dominion in 1785.



demanded, and were promised as their price, the ports of Salsette and Bassein. The Bombay governor had no power to conclude such a treaty, since Hastings was already Governor-General. Hastings was entirely averse from superfluous meddling in native politics. But the Bombay authorities proceeded to active hostilities on behalf of Ragoba before there was time to stop them. Hastings felt that in the circumstances withdrawal was impossible. But the Triumvirate overrode Hastings, and negotiated a treaty with the regency acting for the infant peishwa at Puna. But then came the news that a French adventurer had arrived at Puna, while the intervention of France in the American War just at this time pointed to a serious danger of the revival of the French question in India. The Triumvirate at Calcutta had been broken up by the deaths of Monson and Clavering. With his hands thus freed, therefore, Hastings designed to co-operate with Bombay again in making Ragoba peishwa. Bombay did not wait to co-operate, but blundered into disaster in a hurry; only the brilliant march across India of a small force despatched by Hastings under Captain Goddard saved Bombay from an altogether ignominious collapse. Negotiations with the different Maratha chiefs, all of whom played fast and loose with each other and with the British, occupied the eighteen months following Goddard's arrival in the West—varied with occasional skirmishes.

Meanwhile, Madras had not been idle in the work of mischief-making. The authorities there had in 1773 made a present of Tanjur, which was not theirs to give, to the Nawab of the Carnatic, ostensibly because it would be inconvenient if Tanjur happened to turn hostile, actually because the Nawab of Arcot was heavily in debt to various servants of the company, and the possession of Tanjur might help him to pay a dividend. Then, after the Madras council had arrested and imprisoned the exceedingly arbitrary Governor Pigott, who had been sent out to try to restore order, the authorities proceeded to alarm the Nizam by proposing to cancel in the existing treaties with him such details as were inconvenient to them. As this was just at the time when Bombay had plunged itself into its worst difficulties, the Nizam thought the moment opportune for forming an anti-British coalition with the Marathas and Haidar Ali of Mysore, and perhaps with the French at Mauritius.

Now for the past ten years Haidar, a born captain, had been organising in Mysore an army more powerful than had been wielded by any potentate since the death of Aurangzib. He was much too shrewd to be in a hurry to quarrel with the British, with whom he would have preferred an alliance; but the conduct of the Madras authorities was not encouraging. Then came the declaration of war between Britain and France; Haidar opened communications with Mauritius. Hastings, as a matter of course, issued from Calcutta orders for the seizure of the French factories. The French port of Mahé on the west coast could not be attacked without violating Haidar's territory, nevertheless the British seized it without reference to him. This was the last straw; and suddenly in July 1780 Haidar Ali



swept down from Mysore into the Carnatic with a hundred thousand men, ravaged the whole country, cut up one British detachment, and swept all the whites into Madras.

It was fortunate that the native powers were incapable of making common cause for any long time. The Nizam at once became more afraid of Haidar than of the British. The Maratha chiefs were playing each one for his own hand. At the moment Sindhia and Holkar were on the side of the Puna regency; the Gaekwar and the Bhonsla, the most westerly and the most easterly of the confederacy, were keeping aloof. In August, while Haidar was ravaging the Carnatic, a small British force under Popham and Bruce, which had been detached to Sindhia's territory, completely restored the prestige of British arms by surprising and capturing that prince's headquarters, the rock fortress of Gwalior, which was supposed to be impregnable. Sindhia, who had been acting farther south in conjunction with Holkar, was at once drawn back to take care of his own territories, the Gaekwar and the Bhonsla decided to do nothing, and Sindhia, finding that Holkar was gaining credit at his expense, began to reconsider the position. Thus the opportune capture of Gwalior had the practical effect of preventing any other power from co-operating with Haidar, and of leaving Hastings free to concentrate almost exclusively upon the defence of the Carnatic. Eyre Coote was despatched thither from Calcutta, and although he was grievously hampered by the mismanagement of the Madras government, he routed Haidar's forces three times during the summer of 1781. It was just after this that the declaration of war between Britain and Holland led to the capture of Negapatam and Trincomali.

The close of 1781, however, was the lowest moment of the British fortunes. Yorktown fell, Britain had lost her naval supremacy, and the ablest, perhaps, of all French admirals, Suffren, was making for the Indian Seas. Still the obstinate valour of the British commander Hughes and his subordinates, displayed during 1782 in a series of engagements none of which could be definitely described as a victory for either side, prevented the brilliant abilities of the French admiral from effecting anything of a decisive character. The old Sultan of Mysore—he was eighty years of age—died, and was succeeded by his much less capable if equally ambitious son Tippu Sahib or Tippu Sultan; and in the following year, just as it seemed that the decisive struggle was on the point of taking place, the news came that the peace preliminaries had been signed between France and Great Britain. The Madras government, in defiance of Hastings, stopped the operations against Tippu and made peace with him on terms which he was able to represent as having been dictated by himself as victor. Hostilities with the Marathas had ceased some time earlier.

Hastings had not desired or aimed at any extension of British territory, and the only actual addition made under him to the British dominion was that of the district of Benares, ceded by Oudh in return for British support. But it was his vigour and audacity which enabled Goddard and Popham to



neutralise the blunders of Bombay, and permitted Eyre Coote to retrieve the position in the Carnatic which had been so terribly jeopardised by the government of Madras. It was the diplomacy of Hastings which severed the Gaekwar and the Bhonsla from the Maratha confederacy, and impressed upon the particularly intelligent Sindhia the wisdom of avoiding an irreconcilable breach with the British. Happily, during the greater part of these complications with the country powers Hastings had very nearly a free hand, because of the disappearance of the cabal against him in his own council; though at the last he again lost some of his freedom of action, because the cabal against him in England, reinforced by Sir Philip Francis, was in the ascendant. But we have still to give attention to some other aspects of his rule in Bengal itself and with relation to Oudh.

These are affairs of which the most conspicuous belong rather to the province of the biographer rather than of the historian, since they did not permanently affect the position of the British, whereas they were utilised as leading features in indictments against the Governor-General. Still they cannot be passed over. The first of these is the suppression of Cheyte Singh, the Rajah of Benares.

When Shujah Daulah, the Oudh wazir, died, he was succeeded by his son, Asaf ud-Daulah. The Triumvirate, newly arrived in India, made exceedingly heavy demands on the new wazir, insisting on an increase of the subsidies granted by his father for the maintenance of troops under British control in Oudh. They required also for the same purpose the cession of the district of Benares, and at the same time they caused very serious embarrassment to the wazir by guaranteeing to the royal ladies or Begums, his mother and grandmother, a quantity of treasure left by the old wazir, as well as sundry very rich estates which ought in the natural course to have supplied the wazir's exchequer.

Now the title of Rajah, which had been conferred upon Cheyte Singh's father by the Oudh wazir, has no very precise translation. A rajah might be an independent monarch, or he might be merely a big landowner or *zemindar*, whose title meant less than that of an earl in England. Cheyte Singh, in short, was a vassal of the wazir of Oudh, who, by the transfer of Benares to the British, became a vassal of the British. He had paid a tribute to the wazir, and that tribute was now due to the British. When the Maratha war increased the Bengal exchequer's chronic need of money, Hastings demanded an increase of tribute from Benares. Such demands were a normal part of the oriental system; if the overlord could enforce them, they were paid; if he could not, they were not paid. Cheyte Singh tried to evade payment; Hastings imposed a fine by way of penalty. Still the rajah evaded payment. Hastings went to Benares with a very small escort and arrested him; the population rose, and Hastings was in no little personal danger. Nevertheless the revolt was very promptly suppressed; the rajah was deposed, and Benares was forfeited to the company. The fines imposed were heavy enough to be called vindictive, though in no way



contrary to oriental precedent; but Hastings had the excuse that Cheyte Singh was under very strong suspicion of treasonable correspondence with Haidar Ali, or at least of taking advantage of Haidar Ali's hostility to the British to seek his own liberation from his British overlords. The most serious interpretation of Hastings's action was that he deliberately intended to goad Cheyte Singh into revolt in order to have an excuse for forfeiting Benares; but that view is hardly warranted by the facts.

Next comes the affair of the Oudh Begums. Asaf ud-Daulah, having his revenues seriously curtailed as compared with those of his father by the action of the Bengal government controlled by the Triumvirate, failed to meet his obligations. The Bengal government threatened him, whereupon he pointed out that he would have been able to meet his obligations if the British had not guaranteed to the Begums the treasure which ought to have been at his disposal. That guarantee had been given by the vote of the majority of the council, in flat defiance of the Governor-General. But the Triumvirate was now dissolved, and Hastings considered himself at liberty to withdraw the guarantee. Moreover, there was again the excuse that the Begums were more than suspected of having encouraged and supported Cheyte Singh. Hastings cancelled the guarantee; the wazir proceeded to make seizure of the treasure; the Begums resisted, and were declared to be in a state of rebellion, which justified his intervention. With the help of the British, the wazir had no difficulty in enforcing his claims; but, as in the case of the

Rohillas, no proper steps were taken to prevent him from adopting oriental methods in the treatment of the Begums and their supporters, although ultimately the Begums were placed upon a fairly liberal allowance. There is no possible doubt that in both these cases Hastings was actuated by the pressing need of replenishing the exchequer, and that a severity was exercised for which only extreme need could furnish a plausible excuse. But indubitably the extreme need was there, and, judged by native standards and native practice, the Governor-General's action was a mere matter of course.

A third matter which has been employed to blacken the fair fame not so much of Hastings as of Chief Justice Impey is the contest between the supreme court and the council, and the compromise by which it was terminated. We have seen that the judges sent out from England claimed to be responsible only to the Crown, not to the council in India or to the directors and proprietors at home. They seem to have regarded it as their special function to call government officials to account. The com-

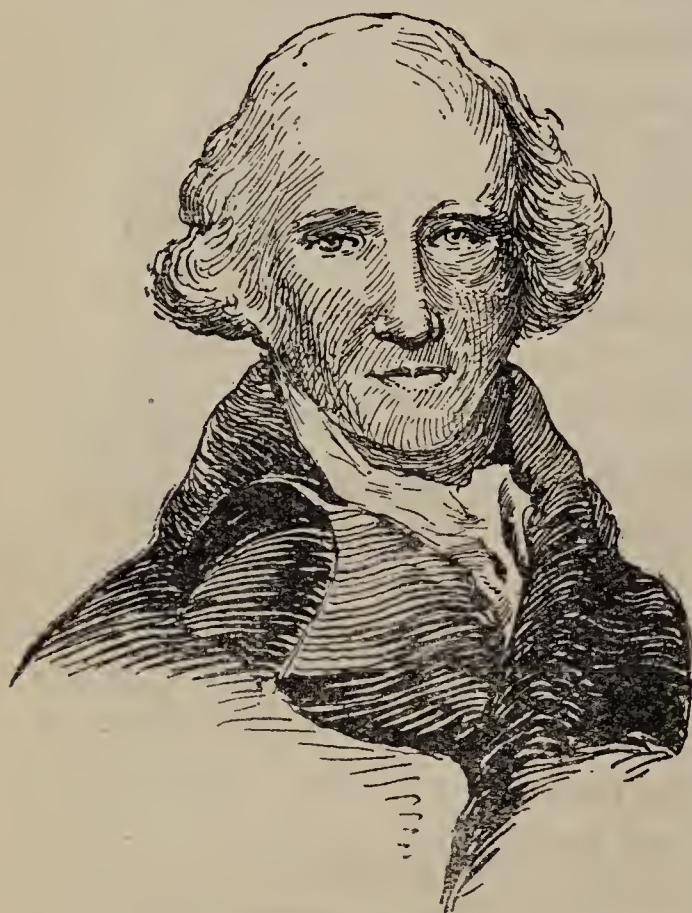


Asaf ud-Daulah, Wazir of Oudh.

[From a contemporary painting by Home belonging to the Royal Asiatic Society.]



pany's officers were perpetually haled before the court sitting at Calcutta by every one with a grievance real or fictitious, until the administration was brought almost to a standstill. At length the council, who had control of the troops, were driven to ordering the orders of the courts to be ignored. Such a state of things could not be allowed to continue. Hastings had no wish to rob the supreme court of legitimate authority, but an authority which endeavoured to override the Government itself could not be regarded as legitimate. As matters stood, the ordinary jurisdiction in the country for criminal cases was in the hands of the nawab's officials, while



Warren Hastings.  
[After the portrait by Lawrence.]

the fiscal and civil jurisdictions were in the hands of the company's revenue officers, the fiscal questions being those of primary importance. Hastings separated the civil and fiscal courts, and constituted a court of appeal in Calcutta; and he offered the presidency of this court of appeal to Impey as an officer of the company. By this means the practical supervision of legal administration was put in the hands of the Chief Justice, although, acting as an officer of the company, he was, in that position, responsible to the council. The compromise was a perfectly reasonable method of getting rid of a hopeless deadlock. Macaulay has succeeded in translating the transaction into a huge piece of corruption on the part of Impey, because a substantial salary was attached to his

new position; but in fact it was only by the expedient of enabling him to exercise supervisory functions as a servant of the company that he could be freed from the necessity of exercising them as an independent authority, and he could not exercise them as an independent authority without coming into collision with the council. The arrangement was a *modus vivendi* which required sanction from home to be rendered permanent, and the purpose in view was substantially achieved. Impey, however, was consistently a supporter of Hastings, and consequently his conduct, like that of Hastings himself, was habitually distorted and misrepresented by the cabal in England, whose presentation of the case against Hastings generally won public acceptance until the investigations of a later age revealed their injustice.



VI

NORTH, THE WHIGS, AND THE YOUNGER PITT

Lord North held office from 1770 till March 1782. Throughout that time the king was supreme. North did his bidding, often very much against his own will; and at the general elections which took place the ministry always retained the support of the country.

That support had been won by the Crown's appropriation of the old methods by which Walpole and Newcastle had procured their majorities. Public money, patronage carried through every department, the distribution of sinecures, the ejection of political opponents from every kind of office in civil, military, and naval administration, secured the subserviency of parliament and the votes of the electorate. The system broke down in the long run because it produced an inefficiency so intolerable that the king was obliged to place him-



Lord North.

self in the hands of ministers who declined to look upon obedience to the Crown as their first duty. After an interval he found a minister of a very different type from Lord North, with whom he could work in harmony but whom he could not dominate. He retained enough of his personal power to be able in one critical case to override that minister's will with disastrous results; but the new royal supremacy which operated during Lord North's twelve years was a proved failure and was not again revived.

The North administration, destructive from an imperial point of view, was almost barren in domestic affairs. One measure for the relief of Roman Catholics in 1778 stands to its credit. Their disabilities in the inheritance and purchase of land were abolished, and the celebration of the Roman



Catholic rites ceased to be a penal offence in England. Nevertheless, the proposal of a similar measure for Scotland was received in that country with such an outburst of fanatical wrath that it had to be dropped. Even in England it was possible to work up the "No Popery" agitation to such a pitch that in 1780 the half-crazed Lord George Gordon stirred up a frenzy of rioting which the most disorderly elements of the community turned to their own account. Prisons were broken open, much damage was done, and the disturbances were only suppressed when the king himself assumed the responsibility of which ministers were afraid and ordered out the military to deal with the rioters.

The corruption of the existing system was brought home to the Whigs when they found it employed against them instead of in the interests of the great Whig families. The North administration began to totter at the end of 1777. North himself would willingly have given place to Chatham, but Chatham died; the only alternative to North was a Rockingham administration, and North held on. The Whigs directed their attacks against the system which excluded them from office; Burke brought in a bill for "Economic Reform," which meant mainly the abolition of sinecures and of the expenditure of public money as a means of corruption. But when it came to details so many private interests were touched that the bill failed. Chatham himself, at an earlier stage, had desired a parliamentary reform which would have abolished the pocket boroughs, and would to a considerable extent have anticipated the great Reform Bill which was passed in 1832. But both the king and the Whigs relied too much on the manipulation of pocket boroughs to approve of such a plan. The most notable outcome in parliament of the attack upon the prevailing system was the passing in 1780 of Dunning's famous resolution that "The power of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished."

The disasters of the war, however, culminating in the surrender at Yorktown, made it impossible for the king to maintain his resistance to North's resignation. In March 1782 Rockingham accepted the task of forming an administration, prominent in which were Lord Shelburne, who represented Chatham's personal followers, and Charles James Fox, the son of Chatham's ancient rival, who at a very early stage had identified himself with the most extreme section of those Whigs who advocated the colonial cause in the most uncompromising fashion as the cause of political liberty. Burke, by far the greatest man among the Whigs, was not regarded as a practical parliamentarian and was given only a minor office. William Pitt, the younger son of Lord Chatham, who had already astonished the House by his precocious talents, declined, though he was only two and twenty, to join the ministry in a subordinate position. Three months later Rockingham died. Shelburne, by the king's choice, became the head of the ministry, and Fox resigned, being followed into opposition by Burke and some others who were personally hostile to Shelburne, who, in his turn, was the minister most in personal accord with the king, with the exception of the Lord



Chancellor Thurlow, the one survivor from North's cabinet. Young Pitt took office as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Shelburne ministry was divided by distrust ; its main business was the settlement of the terms of peace. Fox with his followers, and North with his followers, joined in attacking the Government, which was deserted by one after another of its members. In February 1783 the two leaders of the Opposition formed an open coalition. Such a junction of opposites was without parallel, but it was decisive. Shelburne resigned ; and after some weeks of despairing efforts to procure a ministry to his liking, George was obliged to surrender to the coalition. The Treasury was given to Portland as the nominal head of the administration, while Fox and North became Secretaries of State. Pitt at an earlier stage had rejected overtures from Fox, which would have involved what he regarded as the betrayal of Shelburne ; and he declined absolutely to be associated with North.

The coalition was the most extraordinary on record. For twelve years North had represented the principle of complete subserviency to the king and



"England Made Odious, or the French Dressers.

[A caricature on Shelburne and Fox at the time of the arrangement of the Treaty of Versailles.]

of an uncompromising resistance to the claims of the colonies. Fox had advocated the cause of the colonies with a vehemence which verged upon treason, and had denounced the power of the Crown in unmeasured terms. There was no single point on which a positive agreement between the two could have been anticipated. A coalition between Shelburne and either Fox or North would have involved very much less strain than the coalition of 1757 between the elder Pitt and Newcastle. But that combination had been possible for the simple reason that every one concerned saw that nothing else could save the country from immediate ruin. The coalition of 1783 had no principles and apparently but one object, the exclusion of Shelburne. To that end, North consented that the Crown should be treated with respect but not with deference ; and the two groups hitherto hostile presented for the time being a united front.

Shelburne being out, the coalition found no further need for demanding material modifications in the peace preliminaries which they had first condemned. Their Treaty of Versailles, signed in September, made no changes of consequence. The next question of the hour therefore was that of the government of India ; and this during the last twenty years had come to be complicated by the presence in England of increasing numbers of the



"Nabobs"—men who had amassed great wealth in India, especially under the conditions prevailing before Lord North's Regulating Act. They were courted by the politicians; they were often large shareholders in the East India Company; they liked to feel themselves to be persons of importance and of influence; and they regarded patronage in India as to a great extent a perquisite of their own. The course of events in India had been very little understood by the public at large, and even those who, like Edmund Burke, had interested themselves in it honestly and deeply, had been led astray as to the actual facts by the misrepresentations of Francis and his friends. The House of Commons and the court of directors were both strongly biased against Hastings, who was preposterously blamed for not having prevented the blunders of the Madras and Bombay governments; and the Governor-General would have been recalled at an earlier date, but for the persistent confidence in him of the court of proprietors with which lay the final control of the new appointments under the Regulating Act.

Fox, then, introduced a bill for the better government of India. The political direction from London was to be withdrawn from the courts of directors and proprietors, and vested in a body of seven commissioners appointed by parliament for four years. Absolute control of policy and patronage was to be in the hands of the commissioners; vacancies in their number were to be filled by nominees of the Crown. A second body of commissioners, chosen by parliament from among the proprietors, was to control commerce, the vacancies among its nine members being filled by the court of proprietors.

The scheme at once aroused the hostility of the whole commercial community as being an abrogation of the East Indian Company's charter, and destructive of the position of all chartered companies. Politically it was resented as placing the whole of the Indian patronage virtually in the hands of the present majority in the House of Commons, who would thereby be enabled to secure the solid support of the nabobs at home, and therewith, as it was argued, a control of the electorate which would secure that majority permanently in power. The king saw in the bill the death-blow of the royal authority; the Opposition saw in it the death-blow of electoral liberty; and the mercantile community felt that their interests as a body were jeopardised by the violation of the East India Company's charter.

But the coalition had an overwhelming preponderance in the House of Commons. The bill was carried in that chamber by a large majority. The vote of the House of Lords was uncertain, but was decided by the action of the king, who made it known that he would treat the voting upon it as a personal matter. This turned the scale with many of those peers who in the past had been associated with North. The peers rejected the bill. The Government carried in the Commons a vote of censure on the unconstitutional intervention of the Crown. George dismissed the ministers, and Pitt accepted appointment as First Lord of the Treasury.



The obvious course for the dismissed ministers was to demand a dissolution. The rejection of a bill passed by a large majority in the House of Commons had been procured in the House of Lords by the king's unconstitutional interference. An appeal to the country on that issue would have given them an almost irresistible case, and the appeal could hardly have been refused. But they did not want a dissolution. They imagined that they could force the young minister to resign, and George to recall them to office, without risking an election which might weaken their preponderance because of the unpopularity of the India Bill. Thus they delivered themselves into Pitt's hands. Practically single-handed he fought from day to day in the House of Commons against the most famous orators and debaters of the time, and day by day the tide of his popularity rose in the country. The Opposition had dropped the constitutional issue which was their most valuable asset, and had made Pitt a present of a new one by claiming the right to force themselves upon the king, to dictate to him the choice of ministers, without an appeal to the country. And day by day the India Bill became more and more unpopular. At last Pitt felt that his moment had come; Parliament was dissolved in March, a mere remnant of the coalition were able to retain their seats, and Pitt came back to parliament with a record majority at his back.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

#### I

#### IRELAND

THE eighteenth century had still some years to run when the destinies of the British Empire were committed to the guidance of William Pitt the Younger. But at this point a new era was dawning, an era of convulsion and revolution, political, social, and intellectual. The characteristic movements associated with the century had run their course, and if "The Eighteenth Century" is a somewhat inaccurate title for a chapter reviewing aspects of the period which have been left apart for continuous treatment, it is still more nearly appropriate than any other. Of these deferred subjects the first place is claimed by Ireland, which at the end of the period had acquired a greater political prominence than it had known since the sixteenth century, and had begun to assert as it had never done before a political nationality.

The triumph of the Revolution of 1688 had meant in Ireland a complete ascendancy of one-fifth of the population over the rest, and at the same time the subordination of that ruling Protestant minority to England, or, after the union of England and Scotland, to Great Britain. The Protestant alone had political rights, a voice in the parliament, a hand in the administration, a right to bear arms, to practise his religion freely, to educate his children in his own faith, to accumulate landed property. Even the inheritance of land was denied to the Roman Catholic whose brother was a Protestant. The political disabilities of the Romanist were partly shared by the Protestant dissenter.

The Protestant ascendancy was bound up with the Hanoverian succession. Protestant loyalty therefore was assured; and the Protestants could not have ventured upon any serious protest against the political subjection to the authority on the other side of St. George's Channel, even if their political aspirations had been active enough to make them desire to do so. Not only did they differ in faith from the great bulk of the population, but they were also to a large extent aliens, descendants of Scots or English who had dispossessed the old proprietors. Their very existence depended, or seemed to depend, upon an ascendancy which could only be maintained



by the sanction of force, and that sanction would disappear if they quarrelled with the English government.

But Protestants as well as Catholics suffered from the economic conditions. Virtually the only industries permitted by the English commercial laws were the cultivation of the soil and the linen manufacture; even the export of wool was prohibited. And if the Protestants had the administration and the legislature to themselves, the powers of the latter were exceedingly limited. A bill could be initiated only by the Privy Council, and before it was passed by the Irish parliament it had to be submitted to the English Privy Council, which might simply suppress it. Any amendments or alterations inserted by that body became substantive parts of the bill, which was then presented for acceptance or rejection as it stood by the Irish parliament. During the reign of George I. a Declaratory Act was passed in the British parliament which asserted the right of that body to legislate for Ireland on its own account without reference to the Irish parliament at all.

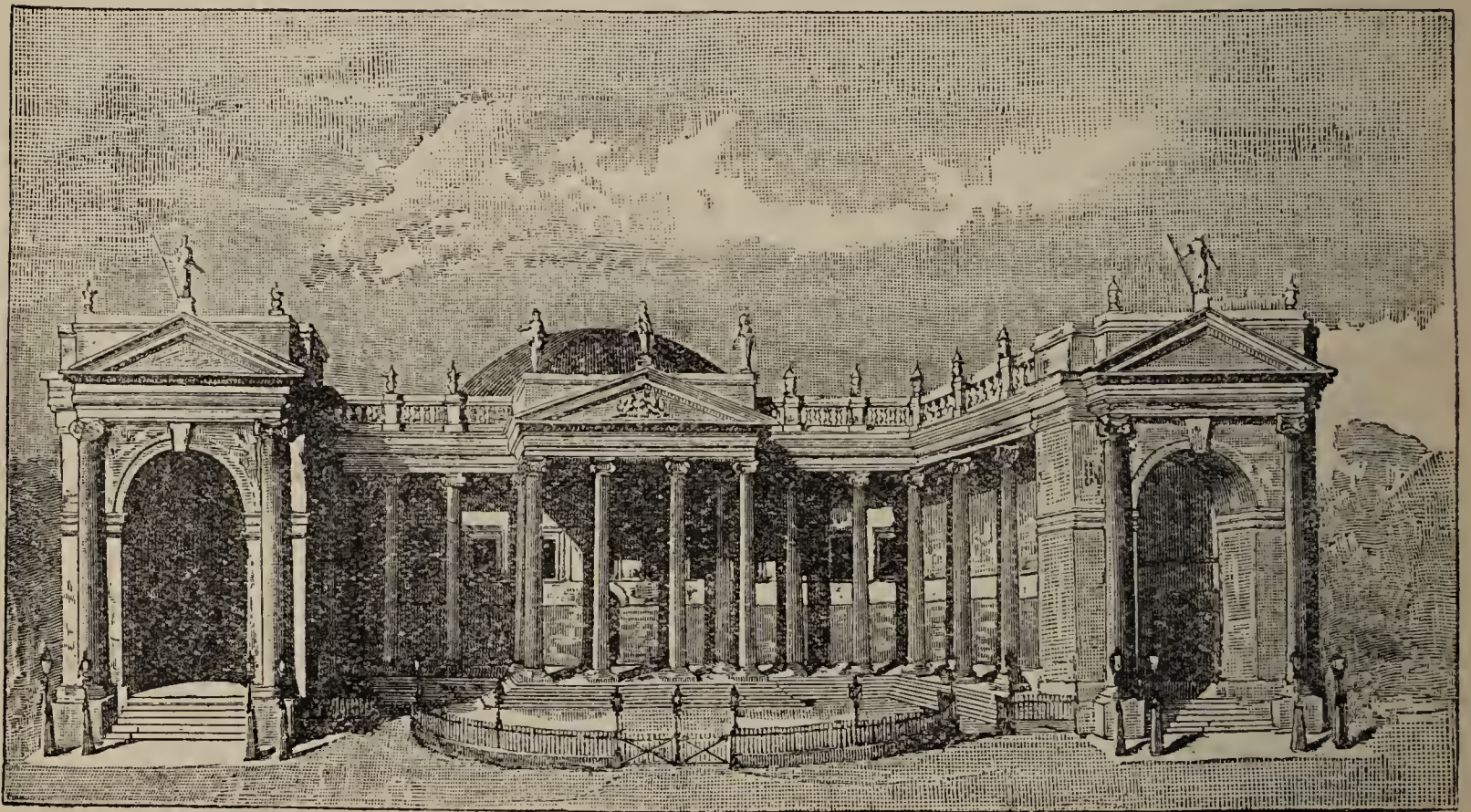
Still, during the first half of the century, Ireland lay almost inert, in a helpless bondage, although Jonathan Swift denounced the whole system with scathing satire. There was no organised effort on the part of the depressed majority to claim the rights of citizenship, or on the part of the dominant minority to assert an equality of citizenship with English and Scots. It was not till George III. was already seated on the throne that the revival of political aspirations and political activity began to make itself decisively felt.

At no time in their history have the Irish people been possessed with the spirit of legality which is so notable a characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon; and one at least of the causes for this is to be found in the fact that the law has been for them at all times something imposed upon them from outside by an alien conqueror, not, as with the Anglo-Saxon, a system evolved by natural development out of their own racial institutions. The Anglo-Saxon appeals to the law instinctively for protection from tyranny; to the Irishmen the law presented itself as sanctioning and supporting tyranny. If he suffered he did not appeal to that law for protection, but set the law itself at defiance and became a law unto himself, which is an attitude altogether unintelligible to the mind of the Anglo-Saxon, for whom, as for the Romans, the great imperial race of the ancient world, the sanctity of the law dominates all other considerations. In the eighteenth century the rural population found themselves oppressed by the law; and the first breaking up of their inertia took the form of fighting the law; not of seeking its amendment, which appeared to be a hopeless endeavour. The Irish peasant felt the pinch of oppression in the relations between landlord and tenant which were founded in the Protestant ascendancy and aggravated by absenteeism. The peasant began to fight the law by the formation of secret societies which exercised a counter-tyranny through the cruel outrages commonly resorted to by weakness which recognises no law. These



societies, "Whiteboys" and others, were exclusively agrarian and, at least to begin with, were neither religious nor political. If most of the landed proprietors were Protestant, there were districts also where there were many Protestants among the tenantry, so that the antagonism of classes was not exclusively an antagonism of religions.

At the same time the political instincts of the dominant class were awakening. What may be called a national party, a body which was discontented with the subordination of Ireland to Great Britain, a body which claimed that the legislature should do something more than register the decrees of the parliament at Westminster and of the British Privy Council, was coming into being. Its first demands were that money bills



The Irish Parliament House in the 18th century.  
Now the Bank of Ireland.]

should originate in the Irish parliament itself, and that the principle of Septennial parliaments recognised in England should be applied also to Ireland. A third demand was for a Habeas Corpus Act, hitherto denied to Ireland, though acknowledged as a fundamental condition of the liberty of the subject in England. And behind these demands there were two more upon which the governing class were by no means agreed—one that the Catholics should no longer be treated as political pariahs, and the other for what in England was called Economic Reform. For the abuses of the electoral system in England were intensified in Ireland and in Scotland also; pensions and places were government instruments of corruption; and an immense number of constituencies were controlled by a few persons known as "Undertakers," who obviously were peculiarly exposed to these corrupting influences.

These demands became active about the time of the accession of George



III., and they were invigorated by the development of the constitutional issue between the British parliament and the American colonies. Still the British parliament would have nothing to say to a Septennial Act or a Habeas Corpus Act, while the Irish parliament made a point of rejecting the money bills sent over by the Privy Council from England.

When Charles Townshend became Chancellor of the Exchequer his brother, Lord Townshend, was sent to Ireland as Viceroy. It was intended that this viceroyalty should inaugurate a new departure. Hitherto the viceroy had resided in Ireland only for six months in two years of office; for the other eighteen months "Lord Justices"—in other words the Undertakers—had effective control of the administration. The Undertakers stood to George in Ireland in something of the same relation as the Whig connection in England. The king wanted to break up their power as a combination while appropriating some of it to his own uses. This end was to be achieved partly by the continuous residence of the viceroy and partly by corruption. In the next place, however, George was determined to obtain an augmentation of the standing army in Ireland at the expense of that country. The assent of Ireland to such a proposal could not be obtained unless some kind of a bargain, a *quid pro quo*, should be offered.

The concession first put forward was that the judges should be made removable on an address presented by both Houses of the Irish parliament on the English analogy; but the plan broke down on the demand of the British Privy Council that such an address should require endorsement by the Irish Privy Council. Then Townshend introduced an Octennial instead of a Septennial Bill, because the Irish parliament only sat in alternate years. The bill became law, the Government gained ground in a general election, and the augmentation scheme was passed, though the persistency of friction was demonstrated by another British refusal of the Habeas Corpus Act and another Irish rejection of a money bill sent from England. Townshend, however, judged himself strong enough to join battle with the Undertakers. Parliament was prorogued at the end of 1769, and when it met again in 1771 he had secured his majority by a lavish employment of every means of corruption at his disposal. The scandal, however, was too conspicuous, and next year Lord Harcourt took his place.

The Irish demand was now concentrating upon the question whether the control of taxation was to lie in effect with the Irish or the British Legislature. The burden pressed very heavily upon Ireland; and the Irish parliament proposed to meet the financial strain by taxing absentee landowners. Absenteeism inflicted grave injury on Ireland, because, among other reasons, the great rents drawn were expended not in Ireland but in England. Many of the greatest estates in Ireland were the property of Whigs who had still larger estates in England, and not unnaturally complained that they were to be penalised for residing on their English instead



of on their Irish estates. The Rockingham group, who were hard hit by the proposed legislation, found themselves disapproving of Irish control of Irish taxation, while they were committing themselves to the strenuous advocacy of American control of American taxation, though Chatham and his followers refused to allow the personal consideration any weight against a constitutional principle. Thus it was a matter of course that Irish public opinion was completely in sympathy with the Americans, and when the American War broke out the British government had no little ground for fearing that Ireland would follow the American example.

This fear was responsible for an inclination on the part of North's ministry to placate Irish sentiment in order that their own anxieties might be relieved. Hence North proposed a relaxation of the commercial restrictions on Ireland; but the determined refusal of the British commercial community to suffer Irish competition was too strong for the Government, and as in the case of the resistance of the English landlords to the absentee tax, British interests carried the day against those of Ireland. The concessions were reduced to little more than the admission of Ireland to the benefits of the Navigation Acts (1778).

More effective was the measure of Catholic relief extended to Ireland, where the penal laws were still more stringent and more flagrantly unjust than in England. The worst features of the laws affecting the purchase and inheritance of land by Roman Catholics were done away with. Though a Catholic was still unable to purchase a freehold, he could take what came to practically the same thing, a lease for nine hundred and ninety-nine years; and at the same time the laws which divided inherited land among all the sons, and the more iniquitous law which conferred the entire inheritance upon a Protestant brother, were abolished.

The close resemblance of the case for Ireland to the case for the colonies, the correspondence between their constitutional and commercial grievances, and the aggravation of the Irish case by the racial, agrarian, and religious questions, were sufficient warrant for alarm lest the Irish should take example by the colonists. The French intervention in 1778 gave the Irish an opportunity for a remarkable demonstration of their loyalty to the Empire in despite of grievances. The Government required every soldier it could muster to face its new foes. It had to withdraw the troops from Ireland and to take the immensely increased risk of an Irish insurrection and of the descent of French troops upon the island, as in the time of the Revolution of 1688; for, as we have seen, the British fleet at this stage was very far from holding an effective control of the seas. But instead of using England's peril as Ireland's opportunity for extorting concessions, the Protestants all over the country formed associations for imperial defence, arming and drilling enthusiastic companies of volunteers; and they were aided by liberal subscriptions from the Catholics, who were themselves forbidden by the law to carry arms. The great volunteer movement was emphatically imperial and loyalist, not insurrectionary.



Nevertheless, it was undeniable that the development of the volunteer movement involved a material change in the situation. The volunteers were there to fight for the country ; like the army of the parliament in the great Civil War, *mutatis mutandis*, they stood for the national cause, and the nation could not afford to disband them while threatened by foreign invasion. But they were men with grievances which they meant to have remedied ; they might combine insistence on the remedies with their loyal enthusiasm ; and if the remedies were not conceded they might postpone loyalty to insistence on redress. Certainly the leaders would not urge their demands for redress less energetically when they and the Government both knew that the appeal to force had become practicable. When parliament met in the autumn of 1779 the foreign menace had become more marked because Spain also had declared war. The loyalty of the address to the Crown was unqualified ; but it was coupled with a strongly expressed demand urged by all the leaders, of whom the most notable were Flood and Grattan, for the abolition of commercial restrictions. Supply was granted for six months only, and a bill for the relief of dissenters from the religious test, which had been rejected in England, was again introduced and passed. The argument was too convincing to be resisted. The British parliament opened the foreign trade to Ireland on the same terms as the foreign trade of Great Britain.

Specific grievances might be remedied by consent of Great Britain under pressure ; but there was nothing to prevent their reimposition when the pressure was removed. So long as the parliament at Westminster asserted its right to legislate for Ireland, so long as the English Privy Council could dictate legislation in the Irish parliament, Ireland was in the position not of a partner in the Empire but of a subject province. By every principle of English liberty asserted when William of Orange was called to the throne of England, king, lords, and commons in Ireland should be the sovereign body there as they were the sovereign body in England, and the Privy Council had no better right to authority in one country than in the other. In effect, the Irish leaders claimed at this stage that the union of Great Britain with Ireland was by rights no more intimate than the union of England and Scotland under one crown before 1707. They claimed for Ireland the independence which had always belonged to Scotland until she voluntarily accepted the incorporation with England. The theory was one which could not possibly be accepted without self stultification by the North ministry, which was irrevocably committed to the doctrine that the British parliament was supreme over all parts of the Empire ; even the Rockinghams had asserted that the supremacy could not be abrogated, though it ought only to be exercised in the very last resort.



Henry Flood.

[From a contemporary drawing by J. Comerford.]



In April 1780 a resolution embodying the principle of independence was moved by Grattan but was not put to the vote. The next practical step was the introduction in the Irish parliament of an Irish Mutiny Bill. The point was this. The authority of the British parliament to legislate for Ireland had now been openly challenged. On Grattan's hypothesis, therefore, the English Mutiny Act had no validity in Ireland. Its effective administration depended on the magistrates ; and the magistrates held with Grattan. Therefore, for the control of the army in Ireland there was need of a Mutiny Act passed by the Irish parliament itself. The Irish Mutiny Act, if it were annual, would give the same security to the Irish parliament which had been given to the English parliament by the annual Mutiny Act in England. The North ministry evaded the trap. The Mutiny Bill sent from Ireland was accepted, but it was made perpetual instead of annual ; and when it was returned to Ireland in this shape, the government influence was sufficient to procure a majority which passed it. But the parliamentary majority was like Newcastle's in 1766 ; it was representative not of public opinion, not even of the opinion of the classes which monopolised political liberty, but only of the power of corruption. Outside parliament the demand for independence was as unanimous as the demand had been in England for Pitt to supersede Newcastle at the helm of the state in 1756.

Nevertheless, the volunteers were not to be shaken from their principle of associating the demand for political liberty with an unswerving loyalty. The surrender of Yorktown only confirmed them in this attitude. It was not government influence but the principle of loyalism that made them refuse an amendment to the address which would have added to it a demand for independence. Altogether the proceedings in the winter of 1781-82 showed great fluctuations of voting. There were stalwarts who, without fear of being called disloyal, voted steadily for the demands of Grattan and Flood. There was a less uncompromising group which voted with them, except when it felt that the Government in its present straits ought not to be pressed too hard. There were the solid supporters of the Government. And there were still those who generally took their orders from the Government, but occasionally ventured to vote with the Opposition. . It was not difficult to infer the real trend of opinion, but at any moment the voting in parliament might run directly counter to the real general feeling.

But in February 1782 an assembly of delegates of the volunteers was summoned to meet at Dungannon. There was no doubt at all that this body was genuinely representative ; they made it equally clear that public opinion endorsed the demands of Flood and Grattan ; and, at Grattan's own instance, they added demands for the further relaxation of the penal code against the Catholics. In March the North ministry resigned, and the second Rockingham ministry accepted in the main the three Irish demands. The Mutiny Act was limited to two years, the control exercised by the Irish and English Privy Councils was abolished, and the obnoxious Declaratory Act was repealed. Grattan's parliament, the independent parliament of



Ireland, had come into being. The repeal of the Declaratory Act was confirmed and secured against misinterpretation in the following year by the Renunciatory Act, which expressly declared that the British parliament had not the power of legislating for Ireland. A new but brief chapter in the history of Ireland was opened, to be ended by the Incorporating Union of 1800.

## II

## ENCLOSURE, MACHINERY, AND CANALS

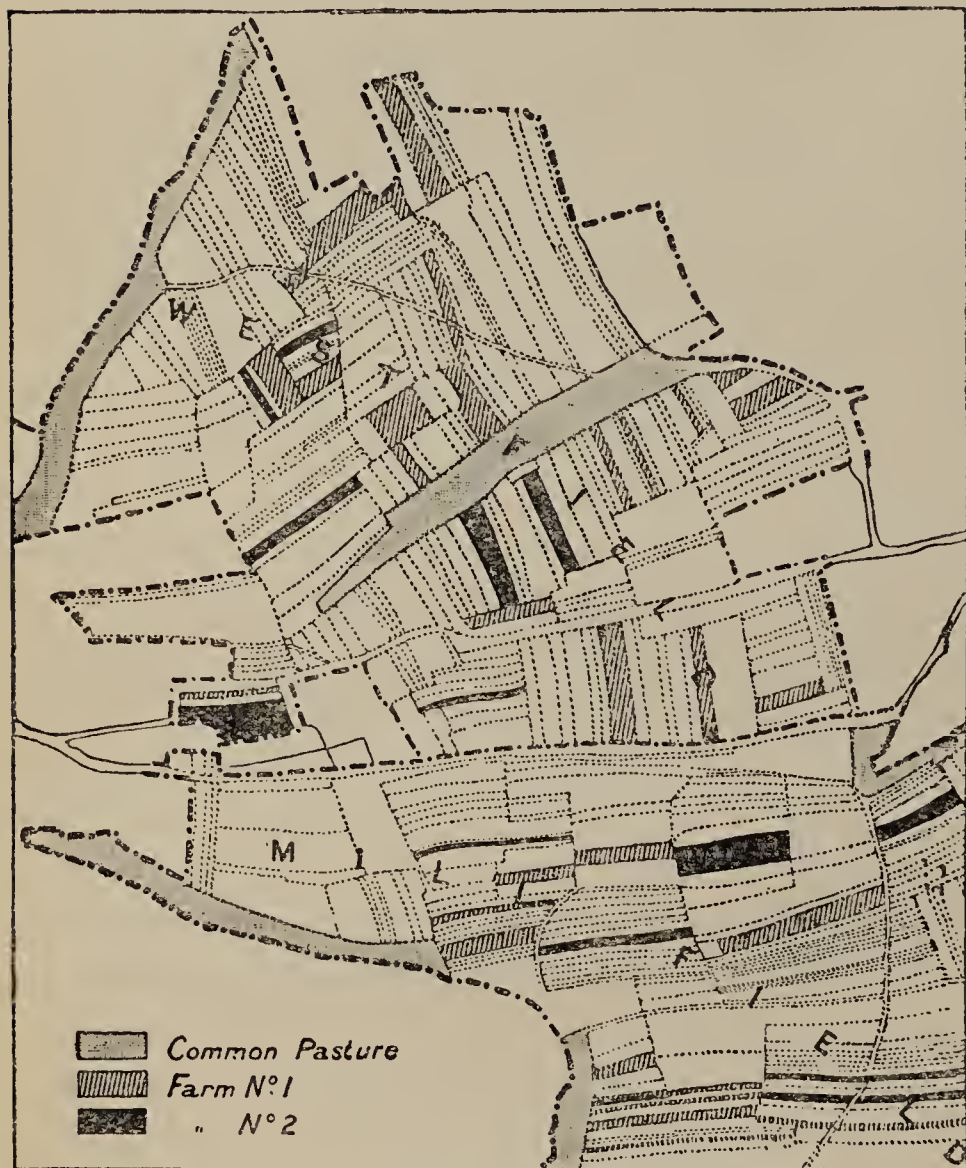
From the beginning of the seventeenth century until the middle of the eighteenth there was a steady and continuous commercial and maritime expansion, but it was attended by no great changes in the rural and industrial populations. The era of enclosures had come to an end; the greater part of the country in fact remained still unenclosed and still cultivated under the open field system, tilled by the small farmers, yeomen, copyholders, or small tenants-at-will who, in ordinary circumstances, remained in undisturbed occupation from generation to generation. The cottar and the labourer had little inclination and little temptation to migrate from the parish of their birth; if they did move they became liable under the Restoration Law of Settlement to be promptly ordered back to their previous abode lest any parish should find itself chargeable with the maintenance of pauper immigrants from other districts. The Elizabethan Poor Law prevented actual destitution, and generally provided some sort of work for the able-bodied. The development of the domestic industries of spinning and weaving supplemented the earnings of the farm-hand, and yielded a margin for the small farmer who lived chiefly upon the produce of his farm. Some new industries, too, were developed by the Huguenot immigrants who fled from the persecution of Louis XIV.

For the first fifty years of the eighteenth century matters went on in very much the same fashion. Yeoman and cottar lived on, not in penury but in a respectable kind of poverty, very rarely on the verge of starvation, but very rarely in a condition of what could fairly be called comfort. The age was apathetic and unambitious, too unambitious to be discontented; and benevolent moralists observed with satisfaction that children were taught the virtues of industry and helped to earn their own living almost as soon as they could talk. There was very little in the shape of class antagonism, none of the opposition between capital and labour which was the outcome of a later industrialism, none of the opposition between gentry and peasantry which was presently to become so terribly conspicuous in France—because in England the peasantry were in no sense serfs, and the gentry were commonly disposed to a mildly paternal benevolence. There was no incentive to agricultural progress because the old open field system still kept the comparatively enterprising spirits among the small holders at



the mercy of their slow-moving neighbours. The small farmer, even if he had the will, lacked the means to try experiments or to adopt new methods which paid when they were applied upon a large but not upon a small scale.

On the other hand, considerable progress was made in agricultural methods by large proprietors. They introduced the growing of roots and



A typical "strip" farm or open field.

[At Laxton, Northants. Retained until late in the 19th century.]

grasses; they adopted an improved rotation of crops, and very considerable advances were made in cattle-breeding. But the point to be immediately observed is that the progress was made on the estates where enclosure had already been carried out—enclosure, that is, in the sense of the abolition of the open fields made up of acre strips, and the substitution of the large enclosed fields worked under a single management. The yeoman farmed for subsistence, the owner of a large estate farmed for commercial profit; he could turn experiment and enterprise to financial account, while he was able to produce at less cost than the small farmer with his antiquated methods.

As yet, however, the yeoman

did not feel the pinch of competition. The owner of a great estate might be desirous of extending his operations and anxious to carry enclosure further; but the yeoman, as long as he could hold his ground, was not inclined to make way for him, and he was able to hold his ground by help of the subsidiary occupations of weaving and spinning. Enclosure went on during the first half of the eighteenth century, but it went on very slowly.

Then a change began to set in, the change which brought about the practical extinction of the yeoman and the absorption of the land of the small freeholder and copyholder into the large estate. It is possible that if there had been no Industrial Revolution the yeoman and the cottar might have survived; possible but not probable, for the yeoman, through no fault of his own, or only partly by his own fault, stood in the way



of agricultural progress and prevented the development of the productive power of the country. The mere necessity for that development would probably have swept him away in any case, but his fate was sealed by the destruction of the domestic industries which had kept him afloat. Oliver Goldsmith, in his *Deserted Village* (1770), gives a sentimental description of the decay of rural life, attributed to the greed and oppression of the wealthy ; but in fact the yeoman and the cottar were finding themselves no longer able to make a living ; they were perishing from economic pressure, not from the avarice of their wealthier neighbours, who were able to make infinitely more productive the land which small men were driven to resign, while the small men themselves were absorbed into the mass of wage-labourers.

Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century four-fifths of the population, or not much less, was rural, living not in the towns but in farms and villages, and practically the whole of that rural population was occupied simultaneously with agriculture in the inclusive sense and the domestic industries. In the neighbourhood of the centres of cloth manufacture, still the principal manufacture of the country, the domestic industries were their mainstay and the field-work was supplementary. Further afield the order was reversed, and the product of field-work was supplemented by the domestic industries. Textiles of one sort or another—woollens, cotton, linen, silk—were the principal products, woollens having an immense preponderance in England, linens in Ireland and to a less degree in Scotland. Silk was the specialty of the Huguenot immigrants, and the importance of cotton was still in the future.

The spinning and weaving on which these manufactures depended were domestic industries—industries, that is to say, conducted at the fireside of each household—so long as the loom and the spinning-wheel might properly be called not machines but tools. When we distinguish between tools and machinery we mean by the former implements driven by the workman himself, by the latter implements in which another driving power is brought into play. Machinery existed in the windmills and water-mills, where the power of wind and water was utilised for grinding corn, and in the steam-pump, an invention of the last century which was in use chiefly in mines. The great feature of the last forty years of the century was the invention of machinery driven first by water power and then by steam power, which began by displacing the hand-loom and the spinning-wheel, and went on to revolutionise the entire industrial system.

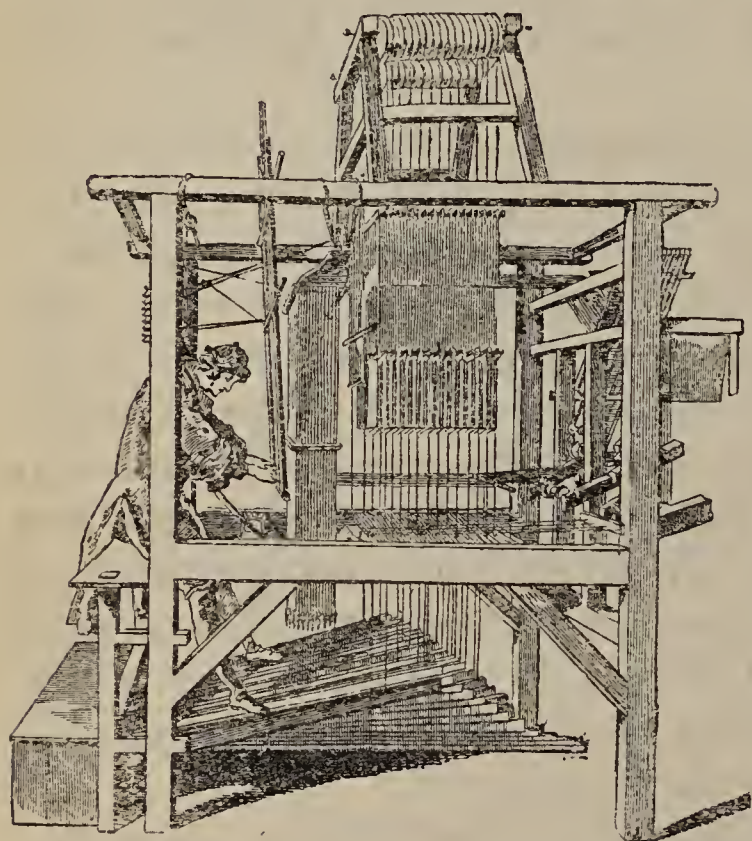
The era of inventions was initiated with what was still a new "tool." The weavers could not produce fast enough ; that is to say, the spinners could supply them with yarn faster than they could weave it. The output of the weavers was doubled when John Kay invented the fly-shuttle in 1732, for the new shuttle enabled them to weave cloth of double width. The spinners were left behind until, in 1764, Hargreave invented the spinning-jenny, which worked eight spindles at once by a single action ; and



Hargreave was followed five years later by Richard Arkwright, who invented a jenny driven by water power. Arkwright's water-frame was the harbinger of the new machinery. It initiated the application of water power to manufacture; and the application of water power was the beginning of the end of domestic industries, because the hand worker could not compete with the machines, and the machines were necessarily set up not in the farm-house or cottage but where water power was available on the banks of streams. The water-frame was followed ten years later by Crompton's machine known as the "mule"; but the weavers did not get a power-loom

until Cartwright's machine was invented in 1784. So far as concerned these two domestic industries of spinning and weaving, all the advances from 1764 until 1784 were in spinning.

Any improvements in tools and machinery mean that for a given expenditure of human energy and labour either a better quality or a greater quantity of goods can be produced, or both. An improvement in quality is a benefit which has no drawbacks; increase in quantity is injurious to the producer unless increased demand keep pace with increased supply. Labour-saving is almost always beneficial in the long run, because in the long run demand overtakes supply; but it is not always so at the outset. Thus,



An old hand weaver at his loom.

[From the "Universal Magazine," 1747.]

before the invention of the spinning-jenny, it was the spinners who gained by the fly-shuttle, because the weavers with their increased power of production wanted all the yarn they could get. But for a time there was not enough yarn to go round among the weavers, and their profits were reduced. Then the spinning-jenny multiplied the productive capacity of the spinners; the weavers got as much yarn as they could manage, and a smaller number of spinners than before were able with ease to meet the whole available demand; therefore the spinners in their turn suffered. When the public wanted all that the clothiers could supply, the clothiers wanted all that the weavers could supply, and the weavers wanted all that the spinners could supply, every one was the better; but when the weavers wanted more than the spinners could supply they suffered, and when they wanted less the spinners suffered. It was only in the long run that the balance became adjusted, when lowered prices increased the demand.

In the period of which we are speaking the balance was not adjusted; the whole mass of those whose livelihood depended mainly or partly upon



the spinning-wheel suffered, and that meant the greater portion of the rural population. In part at least this was the cause of the disappearance of the cottar and yeoman, and the rapid progress of enclosure. And this in turn meant the increase of poverty and even of destitution in the rural districts, and a demand for a revised administration of the poor law in order to cope with it. Once again poor relief became a pressing problem, which was dealt with by Gilbert's Acts in 1782. One of these was directed to the combination of parishes in unions for the better organisation of poor law administration. But the Acts between them introduced a system of outdoor relief for the able-bodied, and gave extended power to the magistrates for the application of rates to the mitigation of distress. The magistrates were benevolent and well-intentioned, but short-sighted; and later we shall



The canal aqueduct over the river Irwell.

[From a print of 1793.]

see that before the end of the century they applied their powers with most disastrous results.

In another field a great change was inaugurated, the precursor of another change which was to be in operation three-quarters of a century later. Until after the middle of the eighteenth century, traffic and communication were conducted entirely by road, that is, by the packhorse and the waggon, or by sea. Practically no use was made of waterways; the roads themselves were for the most part villainously bad, and the cost of transport was exceedingly heavy. The Duke of Bridgewater was the pioneer of the canal system. He discovered an engineer of extraordinary genius in the person of the wholly illiterate James Brindley, and in 1758 he obtained sanction by an Act of parliament for the construction of a canal between Worsley and Manchester. In 1761 the canal was opened, although Brindley's schemes for it had been jeered at as visionary and impracticable. Men saw with amazement ships passing over an aqueduct forty feet above the river Irwell. So much did this seven-mile canal reduce the cost of carriage between Worsley and Manchester that the price of coal



in Manchester was halved. The effect of Brindley's success was instantaneous. In the next twenty years many hundreds of miles of canals were planned and carried out; before the end of the century there was a network of canals all over the country. An infinitely greater bulk of goods could be carried in much greater security on barges than in waggons, at a very much smaller expenditure of horse power and labour, though there was no diminution of either, owing to the enormous increase in the amount of traffic.

The spirit of invention was abroad. Hitherto we have spoken of it only in its application to the industries which touched the agrarian population. English pottery also rose to a new eminence, Josiah Wedgwood leading the way. But of all the inventions the most decisively influential on the national industries were those which were concerned with iron, coal, and steam. The development of the iron industry depended upon the furnace, and in the first half of the century charcoal was still the necessary fuel. Hence, although the quantity of iron in the soil was immense the output was small; the iron-fields were limited to the regions where forests were available, and Sussex held a foremost place among the iron counties. Coal was of no use, because a sufficient blast could not be obtained, although towards the middle of the century there was a considerable development in the use of coke in the works of the Darbies of Coalbrookdale. But in 1760 Smeaton applied water power to the production of a blast which at once enormously increased the employment first of coke and then of coal as fuel, as well as the output of iron. Iron rapidly became the standard material for purposes for which it had hitherto been undreamed of, and the first iron bridge was carried over the Severn in 1779.

This association of iron with coal instead of with charcoal gave an enormous advantage in production to the districts where iron and coal-fields were contiguous, and it drove out of the industrial race the iron districts like Sussex, which depended upon charcoal, as they were too remote from the coal regions to make use of that fuel. In these districts, therefore, there was a diminution of employment; whereas there was rapidly increasing employment both in the coalpits and in the iron works of the north and the midlands. It must be borne in mind, however, that the shifting of the population only followed the shifting of employment very slowly. The physical difficulties of migration were immense. It is easier to-day for the working-man to transport himself with his family from England to Canada than it was a hundred and fifty years ago for the Sussex labourer to remove himself to Lancashire. And to the physical difficulty of transport was added the artificial barrier of the Restoration Law of Settlement, which allowed the local authority to send the immigrant back to the parish or hundred of his birth.

The development of the coalfields and of the iron industry necessarily went together; the development of both and their mutual need of each other was enormously advanced when the inventions of James Watt made



steam the motive power of machinery. Iron was the material of which the new machinery was made, and the steam by which it was driven demanded coal. The steam-engine was the last and most important factor in the creation of the new industrialism which subsisted upon coal and iron. The steam-engine had established itself securely in the iron works before the American War was over and during the next decade; and it was rapidly pushing to the front as the leading power for driving mills. The effects will be discussed in a later chapter dealing with the period when they had come into full play.

In the first twenty years of George III. the employment of steam power was still in its infancy. Watt's steam-engine was the child of Newcomen's steam-pump, which, with modifications, had been worked in mines for half a century without leading to any notable development, when James Watt began his experiments. Watt, who at the time was engaged as a maker of mathematical instruments in Glasgow, was employed to repair one of these engines in 1763. The pump suggested experiments from which Watt very soon realised the tremendous powers of steam and the principles by which it could be employed in the service of man. The first opportunities for developing his ideas in practical material shape were given him in Roebuck's iron works at Carron near Glasgow; but it was not till 1776 that a really successful engine was constructed for Wilkinson, the Iron King, at Boxley; hitherto the practical difficulty of obtaining accurate workmanship in the hard metal which was required had stood in the way. When once that difficulty was mastered progress was rapid.



Adam Smith.

[From a medallion by Tassie.]

One more event must be recorded which forms a landmark in economic history, the publication in 1776 of Adam Smith's *Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. For nearly three centuries the doctrines collectively described as the Mercantile Theory had been generally accepted. With national power as the state's grand object, it had been assumed to be the business of the state to control commerce and industry, and to direct them along the channels most conducive to national power; wealth or material prosperity was assumed to follow power; and since the possession of treasure, that is to say gold and silver, was accepted as a condition of national power, the accumulation of treasure, the exchange of goods for treasure, was one of the leading objects which the state set before itself in the control of commerce. Other objects were maritime expansion and the encouragement of industries which were looked upon as fostering a healthy and vigorous breed of Englishmen. It was an accident, not of the essence, of the theory, that mercantilism carried with it in practice the protection of native industries against foreign competition. Adam Smith rejected the "treasure" theory, because the balance of trade rectifies itself automatically.



If there is deficiency of treasure in the country, money is in demand and its value in exchange rises ; in other words, prices fall ; the foreigner sees a market in which he can buy cheaply, and treasure flows in again. Not treasure in particular, but material wealth in general, the abundance of useful commodities, is the source of power, and the maximum amount of general wealth is to be obtained not by the artificial direction of commerce and industry into particular channels, but by leaving the individual to pursue his own interest. Power follows wealth, not wealth power ; everything which checks the development of wealth checks also the development of power ; and therefore all restrictions for the direction of commerce and industry are *prima facie* injurious. Further, it is a mistake to suppose that our own prosperity is increased by injury to our neighbour's, and that their prosperity is detrimental to us ; our neighbour's prosperity would increase the volume of our own trade. The control of trade may be warranted for a specific purpose, as in the case of the Navigation Acts, since an island nation is directly dependent for its prosperity on the maximum development of its marine ; but in general the fullest freedom of exchange is desirable, irrespective of the questions whether the particular country exchanges more treasure for goods or more goods for treasure, which had hitherto been the controlling consideration in framing commercial treaties. Adam Smith's doctrine bore fruit in the next decade in the commercial and financial policy of William Pitt, who was his enthusiastic disciple ; later it was developed into those principles of the *Laissez Faire* Economists, which gradually gained an ascendancy during the first half, and were completely dominant during the second half, of the nineteenth century, in Great Britain.

### III

#### LITERATURE

John Dryden died in the year 1700. Samuel Johnson died in 1784. The date of Johnson's first notable publication was 1738, a few years before the death of two of the most prominent literary figures of the previous period, Pope and Swift, the survivors of a literary circle which had once included Addison. Johnson's own circle after 1761 included Burke and Goldsmith and touched Sheridan. This list of names suggests the characteristics of the whole period ; in the whole number there is only one, Edmund Burke, who was not essentially a man of his century—whose work was not an expression of its conventions. As concerns literary form, these were the men who themselves set the conventions which lesser men followed ; but the literary form was itself the finished expression of the moral and intellectual spirit of the age. Within a few years of Johnson's death an entirely new spirit had manifested itself, and the canons which



had guided or had been laid down by the writers of the eighteenth century were entirely discarded.

Poetry, a great critic has said, is a "criticism of life"; the poetry in which an age expresses itself affords at any rate a conclusive criterion of the way in which that age looked upon life. The predominance of the lyrical over the rhetorical implies the predominance of the emotional over the rational, and *vice versa*. Until Johnson was dead, rhetorical poetry held the field throughout the eighteenth century; the era produced only one lyrical poet of importance, William Collins, though Pope was the most consummate master of the art which claims a purely intellectual appreciation. The Restoration in the seventeenth century brought with it a revolt of the intellectuals against the tyranny of moral strenuousness—not merely the sour rigidity of the narrowest Puritanism but the emotional intensity which had produced a Milton and a Cromwell. In its first emancipation it flung aside morality altogether. Then came a reaction, when it was realised that there was no essential antagonism between the moral and the intellectual.

Under the serene guidance of Addison, decency again became "the mode," and Pope, in finely polished couplets, stereotyped the somewhat superficial philosophy of cultured common-sense. The morality which could be

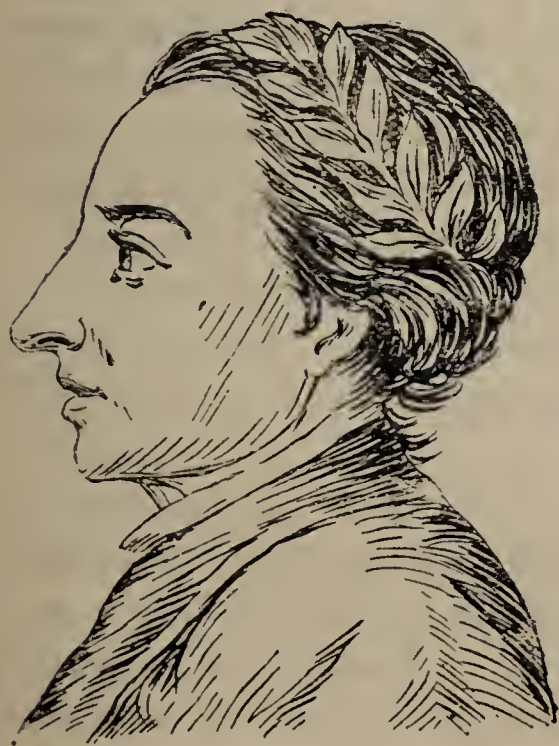
expressed in epigrams reigned supreme, even while immorality which could shelter behind epigrammatic formulæ was rampant. But the criteria applied were those of the intelligence, not those of the heart; the emotions, except as playthings appropriate to the boudoir, were at a discount. Where there is no enthusiasm there can be no lyrical poetry, and the Augustan Age knew not enthusiasm.

It called itself Augustan not inappropriately, for it had much in common with the age of the first Roman emperor, an imitative age with little in it that was spontaneous; an artificial age; on the surface graceful, refined, and polite, below the veneer barbarically gross, and at heart earthy and materialistic. Literature took possession of what was best in it, and that best has a unique charm, an attraction of its own;

but it is something very different from the best of the Elizabethans with their vivid and all-pervading vitality, of the Puritans with their fervour of righteousness, or of the new spirit which burst into life with the dying century. The materialism was at its worst in the second quarter of the



Dr. Johnson.  
[From an engraving by Finden.]



Alexander Pope.

[From a crayon drawing in the Bodleian Library.]



century ; but it continued dominant even while a sturdier morality, deeper rooted, more akin in its nature to Puritanism, was making progress ; while Samuel Johnson by force of character more than of intellect was gradually achieving a supremacy among English men of letters ; while the Great Commoner in the political world, Wesley in the religious world, were breathing life into the dry bones. The breed of English men of action had not worn itself out, but the reviving national capacity for enthusiasm, faith, and loyalty was not to bear full fruit until a later generation.

In such an age, then, it was impossible that lyrical poetry should flourish in England. Collins stood by himself, while Gray's Odes have little if at all



An "Exquisite" of 1720.

more of the lyrical quality than those of Dryden or Pope. In Scotland song still lived, for Scotland was still emotional, still capable of enthusiasm, or there would have been no "Forty Five." But even in Scotland the song which was spontaneous was also anonymous. And as the repression of the deeper emotions was destructive of song, so also it was destructive of the higher drama which involves the dramatic instead of lyrical expression of the deeper emotions. Tragedy, instead of depicting human passion, was unreal, conventional, and rhetorical.

But the very conditions which were ill adapted for tragedy were perfectly compatible with the development of a prose comedy which is of its nature concerned with the light and superficial aspects of life ; and in their own delightful kind, towards the close of our period, the comedies of two Irishmen, Goldsmith and Sheridan, are unsurpassed ; just as at an earlier stage Pope's *Rape of the Lock* was a quite perfect piece of irresponsible daintiness.

The eighteenth century, however, if it was not a great age of poetry, was great in prose, and in other realms of prose than that of theatrical comedy. At its outset the short essay was almost perfected by Steele and Addison in the pages of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*. Pamphleteering was elevated into a fine art by Defoe and Swift. Defoe, in a series of works unmatched in their realism from the *Journal of the Plague* to *Robinson Crusoe*, created the English Novel ; and Swift made the travels of *Gulliver* to Lilliput and Brobdingnag almost as convincing as the adventures of Crusoe himself. Addison's creation of Sir Roger de Coverley reveals an aspect of English life which shows that the general materialism was still far from being universal, and gives the first promise of the English novel of character.



About the time when Johnson was first shouldering his way into the London world of letters, the novel of sentimental respectability was given its vogue by Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, which helped at least to inspire Henry Fielding to the production of *Joseph Andrews* as a sort of antidote to Richardson's mawkishness. Richardson wrote for ladies, Fielding did not. Richardson was a moralist and a sentimentalist, Fielding was neither. But it was Fielding who, like Defoe, held the mirror up to nature and painted life as he saw it in the middle of the eighteenth century, with the robust and virile humour and fidelity which made Scott and Thackeray regard him as the father of the novel. Of the same school, though with an exaggerated coarseness, was Tobias Smollett; with these two names is associated that of Lawrence Sterne, whose exquisite humour was counterbalanced by a sort of refined indecency much more corrupting than the audacity of Fielding or the grossness of Smollett; and Goldsmith gave Sir Roger de Coverley a companion in the "Man in Black" of the *Citizen of the World*, and produced an exquisite novel of real life which was neither mawkish nor coarse in the *Vicar of Wakefield*.

Before 1760 Ireland and Scotland had taken their share in the production of English literature. Swift and Steele were both born in Dublin. Smollett was a Scot, and so were such minor lights as James Thomson, the author of *The Seasons*, and John Home, whose tragedy of *Douglas* was

received with enthusiastic if evanescent applause. Hardly recognised as yet, but destined to be far more influential, was the work of the Scotsman David Hume, whose importance in the history of moral and metaphysical speculation can hardly be over-estimated, while his *History of England*, though in many respects untrustworthy, gives him a place in the front rank of English historians. In the realm of philosophy Hume, himself an audacious and original thinker, was almost equalled in originality and importance by his predecessor, George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne.

And after 1760 the prominence of Scots and Irishmen increased. In the lighter walks of literature the achievement of Goldsmith and Sheridan has already been noted. If Johnson, the greatest literary figure of the time, was English through and through, his biography, the acknowledged masterpiece of its kind, was the work of the Scot Boswell. Burke, the Irishman, was the greatest political thinker of the day, unless we except the Scot Adam Smith, whose great work the *Wealth of Nations* raised political economy, which had hitherto been little more than empirical, into an acknowledged



Henry Fielding, by Hogarth.

[From the 1772 edition of Fielding's "Works."]



science, and revolutionised the prevalent ideas on the subject. But though Hume as a historian was surpassed by another Scot, William Robertson, the acknowledged supremacy in that field belongs to the Englishman Gibbon, whose *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* stands by itself without a rival.



## BOOK VI

### THE ERA OF REVOLUTIONS

#### CHAPTER XXIX

#### BETWEEN THE WARS

##### I

#### PITT'S DOMESTIC POLICY

THE return of Pitt to power was something very different from the establishment of a ministry of king's friends fourteen years before. Pitt was no subservient politician prepared to act merely as the mouthpiece of the king. He had behind him in parliament a large majority, but not a compact one, nor one upon which he could rely to follow his lead, although in the main it accepted his guidance. The principal reason why that majority had been returned was that public feeling was disgusted by the coalition of Fox and North, in which it appeared that both Fox and North had thrown over their principles in order to secure power by combination. A large proportion of North's former followers retained their old attachment to the Crown, and deserted North when he deserted the Crown. Chatham's admirers rallied to the support of Chatham's son ; there was a proportion of Whigs who would not commit themselves to the latest Whig doctrine, that the king had nothing to do but to accept the ministers at their own dictation. These various elements gradually crystallised into what became the new Tory party ; but in the first years of its existence, before it acquired a special character in consequence of the French Revolution, its leader was a reformer, many of whose aims were only realised by what was coming to be called Liberalism half a century afterwards. Pitt, like his father, was personally incorruptible, and anxious to cut at the roots of the practice of corruption. He desired the reform of representation. He desired the removal of the restrictions on trade. He desired the relief of Roman Catholics, and was a warm advocate of the abolition of the slave trade. But, while he was able to carry out his financial policy, he was able to retain office only because it was not yet recognised constitutional doctrine that ministers defeated in the House of Commons on an important issue should either resign or appeal to the country. He could not command



a majority in the House on specific issues ; but he did not therefore resign until a specific issue arose between himself and the king on a question as to which he considered himself finally pledged.

When Pitt began his long career as Prime Minister the world at large believed that the British Empire was tottering. It had been rent in twain ; it was exhausted by the strain of a long war, waged against a group of powers. Its naval ascendancy had been all but lost, and even now was

in question. Its government had gone to pieces, and the reorganisation depended on the wisdom and skill of a youth of four-and-twenty. But now for nearly nine years Pitt kept the country at peace ; during the peace its commerce and its wealth expanded with renewed vigour, and when once more Britain went to war, she was able to emerge from it triumphantly. The wealth she had acquired provided her with the means, and her maritime power preserved her commerce till she had what was practically a monopoly of the sea-borne traffic ; while the exploiting of her native supplies of coal and iron joined with the triumphs of her inventors to create for her almost a monopoly of manufacture. The new manufacture and the new organisation of transport secured the success of Pitt's financial policy.

The main principles of Pitt's finance were derived from Adam Smith. The error of seeking to raise



The Right Hon. William Pitt.  
[After the portrait by Gainsborough.]

revenue by high tariffs had been shown by the successful lowering of tariffs under Walpole and in the first Rockingham administration. The high duties on tea and spirits ensured to the smugglers large profits which compensated the risks of the illicit traffic. Vast quantities of these articles were brought into the country without paying the duties, and many eminently respectable persons profited thereby, since they considered themselves to be under no obligation to know whether the goods they bought were smuggled or not. Pitt lowered the duties, and to compensate the immediate loss of revenue he imposed a window tax—which could not be evaded, because the number of windows in a house could be ascertained by the simple process of counting—and every penny of the tax except the small amount absorbed in collecting it went direct to the revenue.



For it was one of Adam Smith's principles that since all taxation is to a certain extent a check upon the increase of wealth, the state, which must impose taxation for the purposes of revenue, should see that the whole of the tax goes to the revenue ; taxation to regulate trade, not for the purposes of revenue, being inadmissible because the only effect must be to hinder trade. On the other hand, the lowering of the duties on tea and spirits reduced their price in the market correspondingly, diminished the inducement to smuggling and the expenditure on the preventive service, and brought an increased quantity of the goods into the country through the legitimate channel. The same principles were applied to other imports, as had been done half a century earlier by Walpole. In particular the import of raw material was encouraged by reduced tariffs, although the British manufacturer had not yet learnt, as he learnt in the first half of the nineteenth century, to believe in the admission of the foreign competitor. It was not yet possible to attack tariffs of a purely protective character, in each one of which some vested interests were at stake.

The passing of the old ideas of commercial policy was illustrated when Pitt negotiated a commercial treaty with France in 1786. Each country had hitherto followed a policy of excluding the other's goods. No one since 1713 had attempted in practice to traverse that principle. But now professed economists had nothing to say against opening up commerce with France ; the opposition was mainly expressed by Fox, who denounced the treaty on the ground that France, our hereditary foe, would profit by it. A few years later Fox was less ready to denounce our hereditary foe. The French denounced the treaty, because they profited by it a good deal less than the British. But nobody denounced it as injurious to the balance of trade.

An important economy introduced by Pitt was the abolition of the existing method of receiving tenders for public loans. Such loans had been floated by private arrangement and were a gross means of corruption, North's Government in particular having conceded the most extravagant terms for party ends. Pitt threw the tenders open to public competition, which at once secured the best terms possible for the Treasury and destroyed a principal source of corruption. It is remarkable, however, that the financial scheme in which Pitt himself took most pride, and which was hailed with the most enthusiastic applause, was one whose unsoundness



"The Raree Show."

[A caricature on Pitt's taxation and foreign policy.]



was already apparent within a few years of his death, and was possibly realised by himself some time earlier. This was his scheme for a Sinking Fund which was to wipe out the National Debt. Walpole had instituted a sinking fund, but it had been so repeatedly and so unscrupulously raided that only a fraction of it had really been appropriated to the reduction of the debt. Pitt's plan was to set aside £1,000,000 annually, which was to be handed over to a special board, not political, which was to invest it. It was imagined that, accumulating at compound interest, it would in a few years extinguish the entire debt. So long as the money could be set aside out of revenue it was true that the higher interest received by investing money would accumulate a fund for paying off the capital debt; but the scheme broke down as soon as the pressure on government compelled it to resort to borrowing at higher rates. For in effect the sinking fund was then provided for out of the borrowed money, not out of revenue, and when the country was at war, the money was borrowed at a higher rate of interest than that obtained by its investment. A sinking fund for paying off the debt on which there is a low rate of interest at once becomes unsound if it can only be provided for by incurring a new debt at a higher rate of interest.

In another attempt to act upon free trade principles Pitt was defeated. The question of commerce was still an acute source of friction with Ireland, in the same sort of way as had been the case when there was an independent Scottish legislature. There had been a partial relaxation of the restrictions upon Irish trade under North's Government. Pitt proposed to carry the matter very much further, and in effect, though still with some exceptions, to treat Great Britain and Ireland as a fiscal unit. The commercial gain to Ireland would have been great; nevertheless in Ireland, as well as in England, Pitt's measure was resolutely opposed. In England the opposition came from the commercial classes, who resented being exposed to Irish competition. In Ireland the opposition was political, and was based on the fact that, if the countries were treated as a fiscal unit, the whole financial control would lie at Westminster, and Ireland, unrepresented at Westminster, would have no voice in it at all. The independence of the Irish parliament won in 1782 would be curtailed in a very important particular, and to this the Irish parliament would not assent, especially in view of the limitations which the commercial interest in England had forced upon Pitt's own scheme. The measure therefore was dropped and was not again revived.

While Pitt was still an independent member of the British parliament, outside the Government, he had constituted himself the champion of parliamentary reform of which his father had been a strong advocate. The system had ceased to be representative; but while the demand for reconstruction became periodically insistent outside parliament, so that Chatham had pronounced that if parliament did not soon reform itself, it would be reformed "with a vengeance" from outside, the members themselves were not reformers. Too many of them sat for pocket boroughs to be willing



for the abolition of pocket boroughs, and the controllers of pocket boroughs were equally adverse to a change. Pitt's plan now was to extinguish thirty-six of these constituencies, and to increase the representation of the counties correspondingly. London and Westminster were also to have an increase, a share in the seventy-two seats provided by the abolition of thirty-six constituencies. So far Fox and his followers were ready to support Pitt against the vested interests which were opposed to reform; but Pitt proposed to recognise those vested interests by buying them out, and to this Fox would not consent. The result was that Pitt was unable to carry the measure, and parliamentary reform was driven off the field of practical politics for forty years by the anti-democratic reaction born of the French Revolution.

In spite then of this defeat on sundry measures of first-rate importance, to which may be added his failure to carry parliament with him in his desire to abolish the slave trade, Pitt remained Prime Minister; nor did the theory and practice of the constitution call for his resignation. Yet at the end of 1788 it seemed exceedingly probable that his ministerial career would be brought to an abrupt conclusion. The king was again attacked by the brain malady with which he had been threatened twenty-two years before. At once the question of the regency became acute. The Prince of Wales and his brothers, in accordance with the family tradition, were on bad terms with their father, and the prince himself was on intimate terms with the leaders of the Opposition, Fox and Sheridan. Obviously he was the natural person to assume the regency. The Opposition claimed that it belonged to him by constitutional right; that if the king were incapacitated, it followed that the heir-apparent should discharge the monarchical functions unless it had been otherwise decided by the king in parliament. Pitt, on the other hand, claimed that it rested with the Estates to appoint the regent and to define his powers, although it was admitted that the Prince of Wales was the person who would naturally be appointed. The power of the Crown, however, was still so great that it was assumed on all hands that, if the prince became regent, Pitt would be dismissed and the government would pass to a Fox ministry. The curious spectacle was seen of the Whigs, led by Fox, asserting the hereditary prerogative in a most uncompromising form, while Pitt and the Tories were the champions of the rights of parliament, the paradox being partly accounted for by the suspicion that if the Whig doctrine were carried and the prince became in effect king, the king himself would not recover power even if he recovered his health. English public opinion was with Pitt, and demanded the limitation of the powers which should be conferred upon the prince as regent, and the recognition of the principle that he could not claim the regency as a constitutional right. There was no precedent for the situation, but in any case it was felt that the regency of the prince would involve Pitt's retirement. The position, however, was saved by the king's recovery before the Regency Bill had passed through the Lords. Pitt, instead of



being driven into private life, was more firmly established in power and in the royal favour than before.

## II

## FOREIGN POLICY AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

For five-and-twenty years after the Peace of Paris, Great Britain had stood aloof from continental politics, in the isolation which Bute had pro-

cured for her. For a dozen years she had neglected Europe as though its affairs had no interest for her; she had paid no attention while France absorbed Corsica and while Russia, Austria, and Prussia absorbed the greater part of Poland among them. Then the American War had put it out of her power to concern herself with the doings of other nations, though other nations had found the opportunity to concern themselves very actively with her affairs; and then Pitt, in the early years of his administration, recognised that the first essential for Britain was to set her own house in order.

The revival of pros-



Map of Europe, 1789-1794.

perity however was rapid, and by 1788 Pitt was ready for the country to assert itself in foreign affairs if the occasion should arise.

In spite of the French commercial treaty, Bourbon aggression was the inevitable object of suspicion for British statesmanship, and Pitt achieved a temporary diplomatic triumph by forming in that year, 1788, the Triple Alliance with Prussia—now under a new king, Frederick William II., since Frederick II. died in 1786—and Holland. The primary end secured was



the establishment of the supremacy in Holland of the Stadtholder William of Orange, with whose house Great Britain had always remained in alliance, whereas the republican and anti-Orange party habitually leaned to France.

The restored prestige of Great Britain was presently decisively asserted in a quarrel with Spain, which laid claim to Nootka Sound on the west coast of North America, where there was a British settlement. The Spaniards took possession and seized the British settlers, on the ground that Spaniards not British had discovered the country. Pitt replied that the claim to possession rested not on discovery but on occupation, and prepared to back the argument with a fleet. Spain appealed to France, but France, already in the throes of the Revolution, declined to intervene; and by the Convention of 1791 Spain surrendered completely. In another direction,



*TAMING of the SHREW: Katharine & Petruchio; — The Modern Quixotte, or, what you will, —*

Pitt averting the partition of Turkey by Catherine of Russia.

[A caricature of 1791.]

however, Pitt met with a defeat. He viewed with alarm the aggressive policy of the Russian Tsarina Catherine, who was already scheming for the absorption not only of Poland but also of Turkish dominions, which would establish Russia as a maritime power on the Mediterranean. Chatham at an earlier stage had favoured the progress of Russia as a Power which could be called in to counteract Bourbon ascendancy on the Continent; while to Burke and Fox, as to later English Liberalism when it was dominated by Mr. Gladstone, the suppression of the Turk appeared to be far from undesirable. With Pitt began that attitude of suspicious hostility towards Russia which so largely dominated British foreign policy at most periods of the nineteenth century. But Pitt found himself unsupported by public opinion; having threatened war, he was obliged to draw back. At the Peace of Jassy Catherine obtained her immediate desire by securing the line of the Dniester; and Frederick William of Prussia, who had expected to check her advance by British aid, began instead to seek the



Tsarina's friendship, looking upon Pitt as a broken reed. The result was shortly afterwards shown in a fresh dismemberment of Poland.

In the four years, however, from the beginning of 1789 to the close of 1792, the French Revolution and the fall of the Bourbon monarchy were totally subverting the whole European system. France was the type of an absolute monarchy associated with a completely exclusive aristocracy, entirely dominant over *bourgeoisie* and peasantry who bore the whole burden of taxation without having any voice in the government. The burden of the taxation was cruel, and the finances of the country had been reduced to utter chaos by a century of costly and perpetual wars. There was no civilised country where the "Rights of Man" were less regarded in practice. But in theory the Rights of Man were regarded with enthusiastic admiration. French thinkers and writers had pointed out, sometimes with scathing ridicule, sometimes with remorseless logic, and sometimes with sentimental rhetoric, the iniquities and follies of the existing system, and had contrasted them soberly with the infinitely more equitable government of Great Britain or picturesquely with the ideal life of an imaginary Golden Age before man had learnt to tyrannise over man. French aristocrats made much of the heroes of liberty who set America free from British tyranny; some of them magnificently gave their swords to serve the same cause; and at last, when French finances were persistently going from bad to worse, the advisers of Louis XVI. bethought themselves of summoning the States General, the assembly of the Three Estates of noblesse, clergy, and commons, which had not been called together since the early years of the seventeenth century.

The States General were brought together in May 1789, when the Third Estate, supported by a few of the clergy and a few of the nobility, promptly asserted itself. At the outset it seemed that there was going to be a constitutional revolt against privilege and absolutism. Everywhere the souls of lovers of liberty rejoiced when the populace of Paris pulled down the Bastille, the emblem of arbitrary power. Monarchs and aristocrats, however, took alarm at the idea of the subject masses laying claim to political rights and repudiating their subjection. British respectability reproved but on the whole did not condemn a praiseworthy if ill-regulated effort to follow the paths of constitutionalism along which the British nation had already advanced with so much conscious rectitude. It was not long, however, before Edmund Burke, with more penetration, was denouncing the proceedings of the French as an attack upon every conservative principle, destructive of all the ideas upon which the framework of society rested. In England constitutionalism had been an orderly development, a steady growth, rooted always in the same principles. Progress had been made not by introducing innovations but by closing the door to reactionary innovations, by a process of adaptation to changing conditions. France was setting herself to cut down the system which had developed naturally, and to substitute a brand new logical system wholly unrelated to the



existing conditions. The inevitable result would be first a hideous anarchy and then a military despotism. In English democrats, however, the first stages of the French Revolution inspired no such terrors. In their eyes there was room for a good deal of reform even in the sacred British constitution, in which privilege still played far too large a part, and popular rights were scandalously repressed.

The French Revolution was a war upon privilege. As it went forward it became more and more violent, more and more destructive of everything which could preserve a society that assumed distinctions of rank to be the first fundamental condition of public order and decency. In England itself, in the lower social strata, men were already beginning to feel the pinch of the rural and industrial revolutions that were going on. The aggregate of wealth was increasing rapidly, but the area of its distribution was becoming more and more restricted. The agricultural and industrial output was expanding, while the amount of labour employed on it was diminishing, and the population was multiplying rapidly. The superabundant supply of labour was driving wages below the subsistence level; and for this state of things men found the cause not in the economic but in the social conditions. There were not wanting those who persuaded themselves that the remedy was to be sought in a political reconstruction, of which France was setting the example.

In 1789 the States General, converted into a National Assembly, made a clean sweep of feudal privileges. Then it set to work to invent a new constitution. There was a considerable exodus of the nobility, and then in 1791 Louis attempted flight. His departure was detected, and he was brought back to Paris from the frontier; but France believed that he had been on his way to make an appeal to his brother monarchs to restore the French monarchy by force of arms. A corresponding interpretation was placed upon the attitude of the King of Prussia and the Austrian Emperor, with the result that early in 1792 Louis was compelled to declare war upon Austria.

Thus began the European conflagration, for which, in the first instance, France had two distinct motives. The first was national resentment at the interference of a foreign Power in France's conduct of her own private affairs, and the second was the revival of the old idea of Louis XIV. that France was entitled to extend her borders to her "natural boundaries," the Rhine and the Alps. But by this time the French monarchy was already doomed, and very shortly a third motive was added—that of extending



Edmund Burke.

[After the portrait by Romney.]



"liberty" to all the peoples of Europe, who were ready to burst the bonds of monarchical and aristocratic dominion.

In the early months of 1792, Pitt's attitude towards France was still one almost of benevolent neutrality. He saw no reason to anticipate that the country would be involved in war, and his budget was framed without any regard to such a possibility. Leopold of Austria who, during his all too brief reign, which was ended by his premature death early in this year before the declaration of war by France, had shown himself the most practically intelligent statesman in Europe, had declined to yield to the clamour of the French émigrés or to dictate to France after Louis accepted the constitution. Pitt certainly saw no reason for Great Britain to interfere on behalf of the French monarchy, especially as the Crown was still recognised as an integral part of the constitution. If France chose to involve herself in a war with Austria and Prussia, the struggle was not likely to last long in view of the chaotic condition of the French government and the French finances, to say nothing of the French army. France, in short, might create a great deal of disturbance, but there was no reason to be afraid of her aggression.

The prophets who prophesied her downfall derived support from the blunders of her first military movements on the Netherlands frontier, followed up by the Prussian declaration of war. Then the effective government was captured by the Paris Commune, which was led by the extreme revolutionists; the mob broke into the palace of the Tuileries, and the king and the royal family were virtually made prisoners. From the frontier came the news that the foreign invaders were on French soil, and Paris in a panic massacred a number of "suspects" who were accused of treason to the state and of being in league with the alien invader. Terror turned to sudden triumph when the attack of the Prussians was repulsed at Valmy by Dumouriez, an engagement which inspired a new and indomitable confidence in the patriotic national levies which had gathered to hurl defiance at the invader.

But the "September massacre" had sent a shudder of horror through Europe, while the Revolution set the seal upon its defiance of the world by making the proclamation of the French Republic the first act of the new National Assembly. Though hitherto France had claimed to be acting on the defensive against the unwarrantable dictation of foreign Powers, an attitude for which she had at least exceedingly strong warrant, she now became avowedly aggressive. The new Republic openly asserted its right to absorb Savoy and Belgium, and to carry its frontier to the "natural boundary." It proclaimed itself the friend and ally of every people which desired freedom, the enemy of all monarchies. It asserted its right to ignore existing treaties, and its intention of enforcing the opening of the navigation of the Scheldt, in defiance of the guarantees given by Great Britain as well as by other Powers; and in the terrible phrase of Danton, it resolved to "fling before the kings of Europe the head of a king as the



gage of battle." Before the year was out "Louis Capet" was brought to trial for his life; within a month his head fell beneath the guillotine. But before that, war with Britain had already become a certainty. France had assumed an impossibly dictatorial attitude to the courts of Europe, setting at nought all the rules of diplomatic intercourse; and Britain was pledged up to the hilt to oppose the opening of the Scheldt even at the cost of war. In January 1793 war was declared.

## III

## INDIA AND CANADA

The coalition ministry of 1783 was dismissed in consequence of the battle over Fox's India Bill; it followed that a new India Bill was almost the first measure of Pitt's government when he was returned to power with a substantial majority behind him. Chatham, Clive, and Warren Hastings had all been disposed in favour of an assumption of complete control by the Crown; but it was not easy to reconcile such a scheme with the vested interests of the East India Company. Fox's bill had proposed to reduce the company's authority to a minimum, placing the control even of trade in the hands of a commission chosen by the legislature. The bill had aroused intense opposition, partly because it brushed aside the chartered rights of the company, partly because the arrangement of its details was expected to be utilised in such a manner as to give the then existing Government a permanent control not only over the government of India but over the imperial parliament. The new bill was one of those compromises in which the British constitution is so rich, illogical and unsymmetrical but workable in practice through its indefiniteness and elasticity.

There were three powers concerned—the executive government on the spot in India, the East India Company itself, and the imperial government. The first essential was that the government on the spot should be able to act with a free hand according to the exigencies which it had to face, without being tied and bound by instructions from a body which, in the nature of the case, could not be fully informed of the circumstances, seeing that a full twelve-month was bound to pass between the sending of a despatch from India and the receipt of a reply from London. But, secondly, the Indian government could not be allowed to become an irresponsible autocracy; it must be ultimately responsible to the imperial government, which must approve beforehand the general lines of the policy to be followed, and must be able to penalise any unwarrantable departure from those general lines. In the third place, the power of the imperial government must be reconciled with the chartered rights of the company.



The system now established remained in force for almost three-quarters of a century, and was brought to an end only in 1858 with the disappearance of the East India Company and the transfer of the government to the Crown. A strong executive government in India was wholly incompatible with the system created by Lord North's Regulating Act. Under the new system each of the three Presidencies was to have its own governor, its own commander-in-chief, and two other members of the governor's council; but since the governor had a casting vote, he could get his own way unless he stood alone in the council. But the governor and the council of Bengal were also to exercise a controlling authority



"Blood on Thunder."

[A caricature of 1788 by Gillray of Warren Hastings.]

over the other two Presidencies, while the governor was to be Governor-General of India, or rather of the British dominions in India. Further, under special circumstances the Governor-General had power to act without consulting his council. In the next place the India House, that is the management of the East India Company in London, retained their authority to lay down general directions for policy and their general powers of patronage and appointment. But these powers were subject to the supervision and approval of a Ministerial Board of Control, whose members were appointed by the Government of the day, and whose president was a member of the ministry, this body having access to all correspondence. The

principal direct restriction on the powers of the Governor-General was that he was forbidden to make compromising alliances without authority from home, while indirectly he would render himself liable to censure and recall if he departed from instructions without reasonable justification.

Warren Hastings left India in 1785 on the completion of his term of office which had been once renewed. He was soon attacked by the leaders of the Opposition, the three principal charges against him being the affairs of the Rohilla War, the Rajah of Benares, and the Oudh Begums, though there were many others as well. At first it appeared that the Government would support him, since whatever might be thought about the Rohilla War his conduct on that matter had already been judged and condoned; for it had preceded his appointment as Governor-General, and that appointment had afterwards been renewed. But Pitt withdrew his support on the Benares question, which had arisen during Hastings's final term of office, and in respect of which Pitt judged that his demands on the rajah had been excessive and had been enforced with unjustifiable tyranny. The result was that the great Governor-



General was impeached, and he himself was held up to obloquy and execration by the most brilliant orators of the day. The impeachment opened in 1788, and dragged on for seven years, during which the public interest dwindled; and ultimately Hastings was unanimously acquitted by the peers on every one of the charges, though it was not till some years later that the East India Company offered a tardy recognition of the immense services which he had rendered.

The first Governor-General appointed under the new system was Cornwallis, a man of tried capacity and of the highest integrity, too strong and too universally respected to fear the attacks of interest or of malignity. The appointment exemplified the principle generally adopted, that the Governor-General's council should be men of direct experience in Indian affairs, but that the Governor-General himself should have been trained in other fields.

Cornwallis arrived in India in the autumn of 1786, fully resolved to have nothing to do with designs of aggression and to devote himself to organisation and retrenchment. In the interval the government had been efficiently conducted by an experienced Indian official, Sir John Macpherson. But Cornwallis very soon found, like most of his successors, that expansion was forced upon him, however little it might be to his liking. In India there was not as in Europe a long established system of states with fairly defined territories. For centuries every dynasty, wherever it had reigned, justified its own existence by expansion and conquest; it was assumed that a power which did not seek to make itself feared abstained from doing so only on account of conscious weakness. If the British chose to remain quiescent, one or another of the native powers would take advantage of that quiescence to develop an aggressive policy. Aggression could not be met by mere resistance, however effective; it must be directly penalised by loss of territory. If the defeat of the aggressor brought no worse penalty than a return to the *status quo*, the aggression was quite certain to be renewed; the moderation of the victor would be construed as weakness, as a recognition of the strength of the defeated power; and neutral on-lookers would be converted into allies of the aggressor.

The aggressor at this time was Tippu Sultan, of Mysore, the son and successor of the great Haidar Ali. There is no doubt that he was aiming at the acquisition of a complete supremacy in Southern India, and that he regarded the expulsion of the British as a necessary part of his programme. Cornwallis found himself compelled by an old treaty to promise aid to the Nizam for the recovery of certain districts which had been filched from him by Haidar. But Cornwallis would do nothing more than carry out the treaty obligation; he would not take the initiative and attack Tippu himself. Nor did Tippu wait to be attacked. He wanted Travancore, a district at the south of India which was under British protection. He marched into Travancore an army which was repulsed, whereupon he collected a very much larger force. Cornwallis had no alternative but to



strike. Three campaigns were needed before Tippu was reduced to submission, although the Nizam and the Puna Marathas played at helping the British, while both of them were in correspondence with Tippu himself. The general result was that Tippu was deprived of about half his territories, and the districts ceded were divided not unequally between the

Marathas, the Nizam, and the British.



Tippu Sultan, of Mysore.

[From an Oriental painting at Apsley House.]

Cornwallis established the prestige of the British arms, and, not without reluctance, but as a necessity forced upon him by the conditions, added to the territory under direct control of the British. But his most important achievements were in the field of administrative organisation. He was not a statesman of supreme genius, with an intuitive power of getting straight to the heart of every problem that presented itself, and he did not perfect an ideal system. But he was intellectually clear-headed, trained in affairs and in the knowledge of men, broad-minded and free from stereotyped views. Morally he was absolutely straightforward, fearless and disinterested, and he was thorough. Fortunately for himself and for India, the general confidence in him was so complete that all attempts to hamper or

challenge his freedom of action recoiled on the heads of those who made them. Consequently the mistakes he made were those of a sensible man under conditions which forced him to act upon data which were inevitably incomplete and in some degree unintelligible.

The arrangement most definitely associated with his memory is the "permanent settlement" of the land system in Bengal. The main source of the Bengal revenue as of Indian revenues generally was the tax upon land. Now under the old Mogul system the districts had been farmed out to individuals called *zemindars*, who were responsible for paying the land tax while they were left to collect it for themselves. As long as they paid the taxes no questions were likely to be asked as to the amount they collected or how they collected it; and these *zemindaris* tended to become hereditary—that is, when a *zemindar* died, his son was usually



confirmed in succession to the office. Misled by the analogy of Western ideas and practice, the British government in Bengal supposed the zemindars to be in practically the same position as great English landowners. They were taken to be the proprietors of the soil from whom the population of cultivators held it as tenants. An assessment therefore was made of the land; on the basis of that assessment the amount of the tax was permanently fixed; and the zemindar was established on what was virtually the same footing as that of the landowner in England. He had security of tenure, power of alienation, and reaped the whole benefits of all improvements, whereas heretofore he had lacked security, and had been tempted to reap all that he could as quickly as he could without consideration of the remote future. The weak points of the system were two: first, from the government point of view, that a settlement for a long term would have given the zemindar all the security that he needed, while leaving the government free to revise the assessment at the end of the term, to its own advantage. In the second place, it was not realised that the zemindar had not in fact been the proprietor of the soil, which properly belonged to the peasants or "ryots," who cultivated it. At the same time, while the system was actually a new one instead of being as was supposed an adaptation of the old one, it was in practice a great improvement upon the prevailing methods. Experience showed where its weaknesses lay, and in other parts of India settlements were carried out at later times in closer accord with native conceptions.

Probably, however, the most valuable feature of Cornwallis's Governor-Generalship was that his personal prestige and authority enabled him to do what his predecessors had attempted in vain. He resolutely set his face against the abuse of patronage, and he finally enforced the payment to the company's servants of adequate salaries which freed them from the almost irresistible temptation to enrich themselves by illicit methods; and he thus transformed the Indian service from one of the most corrupt into one of the most incorruptible that history has known. Cornwallis retired at the end of 1793, and was succeeded by an experienced Indian official, Sir John Shore, who afterwards became Lord Teignmouth.

The American War had severed the thirteen colonies from Great Britain,



Lord Cornwallis.



and they were thenceforth established as the United States. But Canada, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia remained under the British flag. In the United States there were great numbers of loyalists, known during the war as Tories, who refused entirely to acquiesce in severance from the British Empire. They resented the republican government, which, in its turn, looked upon them as traitors to the national cause. Rather than accept the new conditions large numbers of these "United Empire Loyalists" left their property and their homes and migrated across the northern border, where they were welcomed by the British government, and were planted chiefly in Upper Canada and in New Brunswick. This immigration of a large British element changed the conditions of a colony which had hitherto been practically French in race, in tradition, and in custom, and Roman Catholic in religion. This led to the Canada Act of 1791, whereby Upper Canada or Ontario was made a separate colony. Lower Canada or Quebec retained its French characteristics, while the consequent peculiarities of its government and administration were not applied to Ontario. Upper and Lower Canada had each its own governor and legislature, while each had its own tradition of hostility to the newly born republic on the south. But in each case the self-government of the colony was on the old lines; that is to say, the executive was in the hands of the governor and his council, who were free from control by the legislature just as the administration in England had been independent of parliamentary control before the revolution of 1688. The legislatures themselves consisted of two chambers, one elective, corresponding to the British House of Commons, the other nominated, corresponding to the British House of Peers. In due time, but not yet, the battle was to be fought out which ended in making the executive responsible to the legislature, or, in other words, establishing party government.

These years witnessed also the first step to that expansion in another quarter of the globe which was to be Britain's compensation for the loss of the better half of North America. Although Spain had taken possession of the Philippines and the Dutch were in occupation of the great archipelago known as the Spice Islands, there had been no organised exploration, still less any settlement, in the Southern Pacific, until in 1768 Captain Cook began his series of voyages. Having surveyed the eastern coast of Australia, Cook, in 1770, proclaimed the British sovereignty of that region, to which he gave the name of New South Wales; but still the formal proclamation was not followed by effective occupation. There was, in fact, no particular inclination to seek for colonial expansion, since it was now the general belief that colonies were merely a temporary acquisition, which in the course of time would naturally sever themselves from the empire. But it was very soon found that the loss of the American colonies had one decidedly embarrassing result. For more than a century convicted criminals had been transported to those colonies to pay for their misdeeds by servitude. The government wanted some new region to which it could trans-



port its convicts. In 1783 it was suggested that Cook's formal annexation of Australia, not yet made internationally effective by occupation, should be followed up by planting a convict settlement on the Australian coast. Accordingly in 1787 an expedition was despatched, carrying seven hundred and fifty convicts together with a detachment of marines, and Captain Philip as governor. In January 1788 the expedition landed at Botany Bay, though the settlement was immediately transferred to the more convenient position which was named Sydney after one of the Secretaries of State. Six days after the British occupation French ships appeared ; it is possible that, if Captain Philip's arrival had been delayed for a week, France, not Britain, would have annexed Australia.



## CHAPTER XXX

### THE WAR WITH THE REPUBLIC AND THE UNION WITH IRELAND

#### I

#### THE FIRST STAGE

WAR was declared between Great Britain and France on February 1, 1793. This first war was brought to a close by that suspension of hostilities which is called the "Peace of Amiens," in 1802. Primarily it was a war against an aggressive France which, with the cap of Liberty on its head, was reviving the pretensions of the most ambitious and the most absolute of its monarchs to dictate to Europe and to tear up treaties. It could not lose that character while the policy of the French government was persistently aggressive, and it remained aggressive from beginning to end. On the other hand, public opinion supported and urged on the war because public opinion conceived an intense and ineradicable terror, not so much of France as of the French Revolution. While at first the revolution had excited a considerable amount of sympathy, the proclamation of the republic, the beheading of King Louis, and the subsequent reign of terror in France produced an immense reaction of sentiment, for which the way had been prepared by the eloquent denunciations of Burke, whose prophecies concerning its course were repeatedly justified by literal fulfilment. Those who believed that fundamentally the cause of the Revolution was the cause not of anarchy but of liberty, that the Revolution was driven to its excesses not by its inherent character but because foreign intervention had brought it to bay and forced it to fight savagely for its life, persistently denounced the war as essentially unnecessary, unjust, and reactionary; while the country, thoroughly convinced that the Revolution must be fought to the last gasp, regarded them as traitors. Great Britain, hitherto far in advance of the rest of Europe in the doctrine and practice of political liberty, was nevertheless the most determined in its resistance to revolutionary France, and the downfall of England became a primary aim of the man who concentrated France in himself.

The course and the meaning of the war will be followed more easily if we have before us a sort of ground plan of controlling events. In the last days of September 1792 France had declared herself a republic. During the next three months the republican government proclaimed itself the enemy of monarchies at large, being already at open war with Austria,



Prussia, and Sardinia, because the appropriation of Savoy was a part of the programme of securing the natural boundaries. The French armies, after the turn of the tide at the cannonade of Valmy, made continuous progress. At the end of January Louis was guillotined, and immediately afterwards Great Britain was added to the hostile belligerent powers. Until mid-summer there was a struggle for supremacy in the French Assembly between the orthodox literary republicans—the Girondins—and the extremists of the “Mountain.” The Girondins were beaten, and the control passed to the body called the Committee of Public Safety, which was composed entirely of extremists, among whom the greatest man, Danton, very soon became a suspect on account of his counsels of comparative moderation. From October 1793 to June 1794 the reign of terror was in full operation, and the tumbrils carried their daily loads of victims to the guillotine, beginning with Marie Antoinette and the leading Girondins. In course of time the Revolution began to devour its own children; in March the infamous Hébertists were struck down; in April Danton fell; and at last, partly in sheer revulsion from the carnage, partly because every man felt that unless the thing were peremptorily ended the next turn of the wheel might send him to the guillotine, the downfall of Robespierre himself and his principal colleagues was compassed. With their fall at the end of June the terror came to an end. Fifteen months later, in October 1795, the new government was formed, known as the Directory, which lasted till its overthrow at the end of four years, in November 1799, by the *coup d'état* of Bonaparte, who established himself as Dictator with the title of First Consul.

It will be seen, then, that the first eighteen months of the war covered the period at which the excesses of the Revolution were at their height, and produced that indelible impression of the atrocities of Jacobinism which made the reaction irresistibly dominant in England. And during this same period, when, according to all rational calculations, France ought to have been entirely bankrupt, when she should have been utterly prostrated by internal dissensions, when her armies ought to have been practically impossible to levy or, when levied, to lead, she carried on her government, fought with continuous success by land against the gathered armies of more than half Europe, and produced mainly from the lower social ranks generals of the highest ability—who were seldom given the chance of blundering twice, since failure was virtually construed as a proof of treachery to the republic. Even before the Directory was established two of France's enemies, Prussia and Spain, had withdrawn from the European coalition; and before the end of 1797 the French victories on the Continent had broken it up altogether and Great Britain was left standing alone.

Now we have seen that to the very last Pitt had continued firmly convinced that the British Empire would remain a neutral spectator of the events on the Continent. Like Walpole, he had believed that the one



fundamental necessity for England was peaceful recuperation and commercial development. Like Walpole, he had succeeded in accumulating the sinews of war without making any preparation to carry it on should it be forced upon him. And, like Walpole, when war was forced upon him he did not know how to organise it. But, unlike Walpole, when war came he faced it with indomitable resolution, in a high spirit of patriotism which the whole nation caught from him, even as it had been inspired with a like spirit by his father. In spite of mismanagement, neither Pitt, nor the nation, nor

the king ever faltered even in the darkest hours, nor did the king or the nation ever slacken their confidence in "the pilot who weathered the storm."

Pitt's lead was immediately followed by the accession to the coalition of Holland and the Bourbon Powers of Spain and Naples. Virtually it was only the outer ring of the Scandinavian states, Russia and Turkey, with the Venetian Republic and Portugal, which stood aloof. And besides these enemies of France outside there were still royalist centres in the country itself which of necessity distracted a share of the French government's attention. Until the fall of the Girondins in summer, there was a check to the successes of the French arms which had been so marked during the winter.



Napoleon Buonaparte.

[From the unfinished painting by David.]

But from the time when Carnot on the Committee of Public Safety devoted himself to the military administration, he earned his title of "Organiser of Victory."

The royalist insurrection in La Vendée was crushed. The Prussians and the Austrian and British armies in the Netherlands, after capturing Valenciennes and Mainz, failed to co-operate for an effective invasion and wasted their opportunities. In the South the royalists at Toulon, sheltered by the guns of a British squadron under Admiral Hood, defied the besieging forces of the republic until the genius of a young artillery officer, Napoleon Buonaparte, devised and executed a movement which made resistance hopeless. The royalists were taken on board the British ships, and Toulon was abandoned to the republicans. The attacks of Sardinia on the south-east, and of Spain on the south-west, were repulsed and followed by counter attacks. Austria and Prussia quarrelled over the partition of Poland, instead



of devoting their attention to the French war ; and along the line of the Rhine and in the Netherlands the French, under the command of Jourdan, Hoche, and Pichegru, once more drove back the hostile armies.

Nor did any better success attend the arms of the coalition in 1794. Prussia, already threatening to withdraw, was only prevented from doing so by a treaty with Great Britain, which paid her a large subsidy for the maintenance of sixty thousand men ; and then the Prussian army remained persistently inactive, because the whole real interest of the Prussian government was concentrated upon Poland. Before the end of the year the British had been driven back out of the Netherlands into Holland, and the whole of the Austrian and Prussian forces were on the further side of the Rhine ; while the French were making progress on the Italian side of the Alps and the Spanish side of the Pyrenees. In one field alone were the allies successful. Britain had fully recovered her naval ascendancy, although she made nothing like a full use of it because of the lack of direction at headquarters. There was no organised strategical plan. Nevertheless the republican government had too much to do on land to organise fleets which could hold their own against such a commander as Lord Howe, whose victory off Ushant on the 1st of June was the only relieving event of the year. The French fleet was conducting a convoy of corn-ships to Brest, when Howe caught it and shattered it, though the corn-ships made their escape.

British self-respect was saved by Lord Howe's victory, for the British performances on land were far from creditable. The Navy preserved the great tradition which made it possible, if difficult, for capacity and merit to win recognition even in the absence of any very marked aristocratic connection. But commands in the Army were still an aristocratic preserve in which connection outweighed demerit. As a matter of course the chief command was given to the king's second son, the Duke of York, who, at the head of an army, was thoroughly inefficient, although when he was transferred to the administrative control he did very much better work. But the fact remained that he was wholly unfitted to cope with generals of the order of Jourdan or Pichegru. His incapacity was not redeemed by any efficiency in his subordinates, still less in the wholly incompetent military administration at home.

Before the end of 1794 Pichegru had invaded Holland, and had taken possession of the Dutch fleet in the Texel. The stadtholder, William,



"The greatest general of the age—  
General Complaint."

[From a caricature of 1796 by Woodward.]



withdrew to England ; the now dominant republican party in Holland, always inclined to France, accepted the French alliance ; and Holland was transformed into the Batavian Republic. In April 1795 Prussia deserted the coalition and made peace with France by the Treaty of Basle ; Spain followed suit in June. But neither Austria nor Great Britain would make peace except on condition of the restoration of the Netherlands to Austria. The Austrian generals too met with better success, and Pichegru, dissatisfied with the order of things in France, was as inactive as he could venture to be. But the establishment of the Directory at the end of the year gave France a more stable government, and early in 1796 the command of the French armies in the north of Italy was entrusted to

Buonaparte, to whose services the Directory were indebted for the successful *coup d'état* which had placed them in power.

The brilliant campaign of the young general of six-and-twenty made the French complete masters of North Italy before the end of the year, and established Buonaparte's reputation ; although the invasion of Austria by co-operating armies under Jourdan and Moreau was foiled by the skill of the Archduke Charles, who fell upon Jourdan before a junction could be effected, and crushed him, so that Moreau was also obliged to fall back. On the other hand, the British fleet failed to accomplish anything of importance. Its energies had been dissipated in the futile seizure of islands, which were perfectly useless from a military point of view. Admiral



"A model officer."

[From Rowlandson's caricature, 1796.]

Hotham, who held the Mediterranean command, was a hopelessly unenterprising person, who, when he caught a French fleet which he ought to have annihilated, considered that he had "done very well" in capturing a couple of ships, to the intense disgust of Nelson, who was serving under him. More ominous, however, was the fact that the Dutch fleet was now virtually under French control, though it was not yet able to take the seas ; and the further fact that in the late summer Spain entered upon an alliance with the French Republic which, therefore, had three fleets at its disposal. Hotham, in the Mediterranean, was happily displaced by Admiral Jervis ; but the alarm created at headquarters by the transfer of an actual preponderance of ships to France caused that great sailor's activities to be crippled by instructions that he was to evacuate the Mediterranean itself.

At the turn of the year, then, the danger was grave. Austria had just failed in one great effort to recover Lombardy, and was preparing another which was to be equally unsuccessful. The Dutch fleet was being made



ready in the Texel, and a French fleet was blockaded at Brest ; but the Spanish fleet was very much larger than Jervis's squadron at Gibraltar. If that fleet succeeded in evading or overwhelming Jervis, a complete disaster might easily result. In February, however, that particular question was decisively settled. The Spaniards, with twenty-seven sail of the line, sailed from Cartagena for Cadiz. On February 14th, Jervis, cruising off Cape St. Vincent with fifteen ships of the line, fell in with them. Ten of the Spaniards were separated from the rest to leeward, and Jervis sailed down to engage the main body. The battle was practically decided by the action of Commodore Nelson, who, supported by two other captains, left the formal line of battle to engage five of the Spaniards which were endeavouring to join the leeward division. The manœuvre threw the Spanish line into confusion, and the result was a decisive victory. Although only four of the enemy's ships were taken, the action completely demonstrated the utter inefficiency of the Spanish Navy. It was made evident that this supposed accession of strength to the maritime power of France was illusory. Nelson's manœuvre was in contravention of orders ; nevertheless it won the hearty approval of the admiral, who fully recognised his subordinate's justification. Jervis was rewarded with an earldom and the title of St. Vincent, and Nelson was gazetted Rear-Admiral.



Admiral Duncan.

[After the portrait by Hoppner.]

Still the danger was not past. It was manifest that Britain's power and even her existence depended upon the Navy ; and in April the fleet at Spithead mutinied. The men's grievances were flagrant and intolerable. They had petitioned for redress and their petitions were ignored. The Spithead mutiny was orderly and well organised. There was no violence, but the men stood together. The justice of their demands was so conspicuous that all were conceded, including the removal of officers of whose tyranny they complained. The men promptly returned to their obedience, and there appears to be no doubt that they were determined throughout to be perfectly loyal though resolute in insisting on the redress of grievances.

More serious, however, was another mutiny which broke out a month later in the squadron at the Nore. Here the ringleaders were men who had become imbued with the French revolutionary doctrines ; and while these had the upper hand the danger was extreme. The mutiny spread through the North Sea fleet, whose duty it was to keep guard over the Dutch fleet in the Texel, which was expected to put to sea immediately. All but two of the ships deserted and joined the mutineers at the Nore. Still



Admiral Duncan with his two ships sailed for the Texel and adopted the rather simple device of signalling to an imaginary fleet in the offing, in order that the Dutch might believe that the British were present in force. Happily, however, they were not ready to come out. Then the loyal minority began to get the upper hand among the mutineers; one ship after another returned to its obedience, and the ringleaders were handed over to the authorities. The real grievances were remedied, and only eighteen of the worst offenders were put to death, the Government recognising that the men had been led astray and were honestly repentant of their treason.



"Grandfather" George with the Princess Charlotte.

[From a caricature by Woodward, 1796.]

Meanwhile Buonaparte (or Bonaparte, as he now spelt his name) had been continuing his victorious career, and had extracted from the Austrians at Lobau a provisional agreement which was in effect ratified by the substantive Treaty of Campo Formio in October. Pitt at this stage was ready to go great lengths to procure a peace. But a change in the personnel of the French Directory confirmed in power the group most hostile to Britain; and the only terms which the French chose to discuss were impossible for British acceptance. Negotiations were broken off, and the Dutch came out of the Texel only to be decisively beaten in an engagement of the traditional character at Camperdown by Admiral Duncan. There was no doubt about the spirit of the fleet when it came to actual fighting. Duncan shattered the Dutch fleet, in spite of the

enemy's obstinate courage, as Jervis had shattered that of Spain. The great crisis was over, although Great Britain was formally left in complete isolation by the signing of the Treaty of Campo Formio six days after Camperdown.

Some months earlier in the year there had been a serious financial crisis in England. There had been a heavy drain upon the supply of gold in the country, and a run upon the Bank of England was threatened. The crisis was met by an order suspending cash payments, which was confirmed by an Act of Parliament extending it to the close of the war. The loyalty and confidence of the mercantile community were displayed by its readiness to accept the Bank's notes, although they would not be convertible into currency until the war was over; and it is remarkable that even under these conditions the value of the Bank paper was scarcely depreciated.



## II

## THE SECOND STAGE

A point had now been reached in the war when the French Republic had established itself in possession of the natural boundaries of France, and, beyond its own borders, had set up in the north of Italy and in Holland republics which were virtually dependencies, while Switzerland as the "Helvetic Republic" was practically in the same position. Spain was the ally of France, as in the days when a Bourbon reigned. The victorious General Bonaparte had been careful to avoid humiliating Austria, whose friendship he desired, while Prussia had long ceased to be hostile. The one remaining enemy recognised was Britain, and the French Directory was determined upon her humiliation. What was of more importance than the determination of the Directory was the determination of France's most distinguished general, of whom the Directory itself was beginning to stand in no little fear; for he had ignored orders and acted on his own responsibility both in campaigning and in negotiating, after a fashion which showed that the nominal servant of the state might very soon aim at making himself its master.

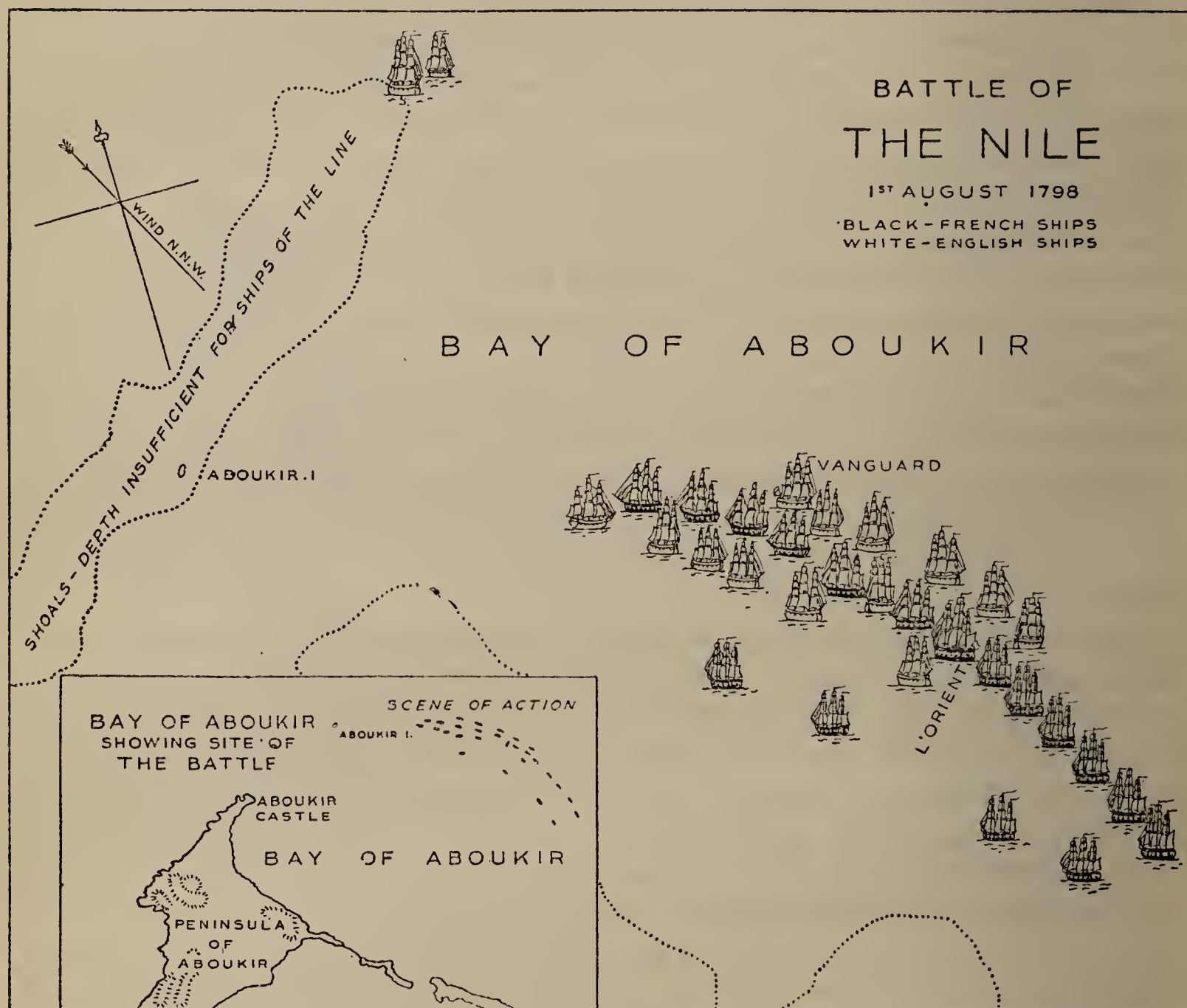
Bonaparte was bent on the destruction of England, but Camperdown had at any rate deferred the possibility of immediately carrying out the plan of sweeping the British Navy off the Channel with the combined fleets of France, Spain, and Holland, and flinging an army of invasion upon her shores. Ostensibly, however, this was still the scheme which was in preparation in the winter and spring following the Treaty of Campo Formio. Bonaparte was appointed to the command of the army of invasion. Nevertheless, the scheme which he was revolving in his mind was less obvious but more tremendous. He had conceived the idea of an Asiatic conquest which should enable him to set out to achieve the empire of the West with Asia as his base. The British Empire was already the dominant power in India; in India it should be destroyed, and the way to India lay through Egypt. The supreme defect in all Bonaparte's schemes of conquest lay in his failure to understand the enormous importance of sea power; and because he did not understand it every one of his schemes for the destruction of the British was brought to nought, from his Egyptian expedition to his Continental System.

Bonaparte's plan, then, was to seize upon Egypt and Syria and to make them the base for further conquest. The Directory was not ill-pleased at the prospect of getting its alarmingly powerful servant out of the way, and it readily adopted his plan. The proposal of invading England was only a feint. Egypt was the real objective of the Toulon armament,



although Egypt was technically a province of the Turkish Empire with which France had no quarrel.

The Navy did not believe that the Toulon fleet was intended for the invasion of England, a project which for the time had in fact been rendered impracticable. But Nelson was detached by Jervis to take charge of it. The expedition succeeded in sailing however before Nelson's arrival. Nelson, finding that his prey had escaped and guessing its



The Battle of the Nile in Aboukir Bay, August 1, 1798.

destination, made straight for Alexandria; but Bonaparte took Malta *en route*, so that the British fleet missed the French fleet, reached Alexandria before it, found no trace of it, and started again to hunt for the quarry. Two days later the French came to Alexandria, the fleets having passed each other in hazy weather. Bonaparte landed, and began the subjugation of Egypt, which was to be followed by that of Syria, and then by further developments. Nelson left Alexandria on July 10th, but after some vain searching he got news of the movements of the French, which brought him back again, and on August 1st he found the French fleet lying in Aboukir Bay.





HORATIO, VISCOUNT NELSON

After the painting by Hoppner at St. James's Palace.







In each fleet there were thirteen sail of the line, but the French ships were bigger and carried a greater weight of metal, besides having four frigates to two of Nelson's. The French were lying anchored in line very nearly from south to north with shoals on their left when the British came down on them with a northerly wind. It was already late in the day, but Nelson resolved to fight. Reckoning that where there was room for French ships to swing there was room for British ships to sail, his five leading ships passed down on the left of the French, between them and the shoals, and engaged the van. The rest passed down on the French right and also engaged the French van, which was thus crushed by the fire on both sides, while the rear was unable to come up to its assistance. The battle raged through the night; the great French flag-ship, the *Orient*, was blown up; and in the morning the French fleet had ceased to exist. Only two vessels escaped; one besides the *Orient* was burnt, and nine were captured. The battle of the Nile or Aboukir Bay gave the British not a mere ascendancy in the Mediterranean but control, absolute, unqualified, and irresistible. Bonaparte and his army in Egypt were completely cut off from all communication with France. The overwhelming supremacy won by Hawke thirty-nine years before at Quiberon was at last completely restored by Nelson's victory of the Nile.

To that victory must also be attributed the formation of the second European coalition against France. Moderation on the part of France might have kept Europe acquiescent in the arrangements established by the Treaty of Campo Formio; but early in 1798 she took aggressive action against the Papal States, and added a Roman Republic to those which she had already established in Northern Italy. The Tsarina Catherine of Russia, intent on her own designs in the East, had stood aloof from the complications of Western Europe, though favourably disposed towards France, because French activity was conveniently embarrassing to her own neighbours Prussia and Austria. But Catherine died at the end of 1796, and the new Tsar Paul I. hated the French Revolution and looked askance upon the multiplication of republics. He was further excited by the French seizure of Malta when Bonaparte was on his way to Egypt; for Malta was the stronghold of the ancient Order of the Knights of St. John, whom he regarded as being under his special protection. Even at an earlier stage, when the British fleets had mutinied at the Nore, he had shown his friendliness to Britain by detaining a Russian squadron in British waters to give help until the mutiny should be over. Now he began actively to negotiate for a new coalition, and encouraged the Sultan of Turkey to declare war upon France in consequence of Bonaparte's unwarrantable intrusion in Egypt. Pitt eagerly associated himself with the Tsar. Naples was threatened by the French aggression in Italy; and after the battle of the Nile the presence of Nelson with his fleet on the Italian coast encouraged the king and queen of Naples to make war upon France—a short war, which resulted in the ejection of the monarchs



from Naples and the establishment there of another republic called the "Parthenopean"; it did not however extend over Sicily. A treaty at the close of the year allied Britain with Russia, Turkey, and Naples. Two months later Austria, which had been haggling over terms, joined the new coalition.

Bonaparte, though isolated in Egypt, did not abate his designs. He opened a correspondence with Tippu Sultan of Mysore, and having established his own government in Egypt, marched into Syria. But before he could follow the example of Alexander the Great and plunge into Asia, it was necessary to secure the port of Acre, which would otherwise be a gateway through which hostile armies could be poured upon his rear. But Acre defied him. Sir Sidney Smith, in command of the British squadron in the Levant, intercepted the siege materials which he was endeavouring to obtain from France, and the stronghold could only be invested on the land side. British sailors took vigorous part in the Turkish governor's stubborn defence; by the end of May Bonaparte had to retire foiled, with no alternative but to fall back upon Egypt. There he received news which decided him that the time had come when he should leave Egypt and return to France to seize the supreme control of the state. With a few comrades he slipped away from Egypt, evaded hostile ships, and landed in France. At the end of the year the Directory was overthrown and Bonaparte was proclaimed First Consul, which meant that for practical purposes he was the absolute ruler of the nominal republic.

Meanwhile general success had at first attended the arms of the coalition. A Russian army entered Italy under the command of Suvarov. The French met with crushing defeats and were all but cleared out of the country. A British expedition against Holland under the command of the Duke of York captured the Dutch fleet in the Texel.

The royalists at Naples succeeded in restoring the Bourbon monarchy with help from Nelson, in circumstances for which he has been severely and justifiably blamed, since the restoration was accompanied by a savagely vindictive punishment of the rebels. But the tide turned. The British in the Low Countries met with some reverses, and were forced to a capitulation under which they retired themselves and released some thousands of French and Dutch prisoners, although the captured fleet which had been carried to Yarmouth was retained. The Austrians and the Russians quarrelled. Masséna in Switzerland inflicted a decisive defeat on the second Russian army under Korsakof, and before the year was over Russia in dudgeon withdrew from the coalition.

Bonaparte, who, long before he assumed the title of Emperor, began to use his first name Napoleon, made overtures for a general peace; but he offended diplomatic susceptibilities by addressing himself directly to the king of England. Had there been any mutual confidence, Fox and his followers would have been fully justified in their contention that there was now an opportunity for a lasting settlement; but there was at least ample



justification for lack of confidence in the French professions, which were interpreted as having no other object than that of gaining time for the organisation of further aggressive designs. On the other hand, the tone of the British in the negotiations revived the popular hostility in France, which had been diminishing. Austria saw no prospect of terms which would satisfy her, the negotiations fell through, and the war continued.

Another Italian campaign conducted by Napoleon ended triumphantly in the victory of Marengo, which in effect paralysed Austria. Again negotiations were opened; the French attempt to treat separately with Austria and with Britain failed, and then Napoleon tried to obtain an armistice, naval as well as military. This did not suit Pitt, since it would have enabled the French to send supplies to Egypt and to Malta, which was now being blockaded. The negotiations broke down, Malta was taken, but when hostilities were renewed between France and Austria a quite decisive victory was won by Moreau at Hohenlinden. Napoleon was able to dictate his own terms to Austria, and the Treaty of Lunéville once again left Great Britain isolated.

The isolation was the more serious because the Tsar Paul had completely changed his front. If he hated the Revolution he had discovered in Bonaparte an incarnation of the principles of absolutism entirely admirable. He was already angry with Austria, and angry with England for standing by her. When the second coalition was formed, it was understood that if the British fleets captured Malta the island would pass practically under his protection; but since his withdrawal that was no longer to be expected. He was dreaming of a conquest of India, and he revived the old grievance of the Baltic Powers that the British interpretation of maritime law was destructive of neutral trade. France, it is true, was not more careful of the rights of neutrals when they clashed with her own interests, but the British fleet could enforce the views of the British government, while the French fleet was practically inoperative; so Paul now proposed to revive the Armed Neutrality. The treaty of the Baltic Powers was signed in December.

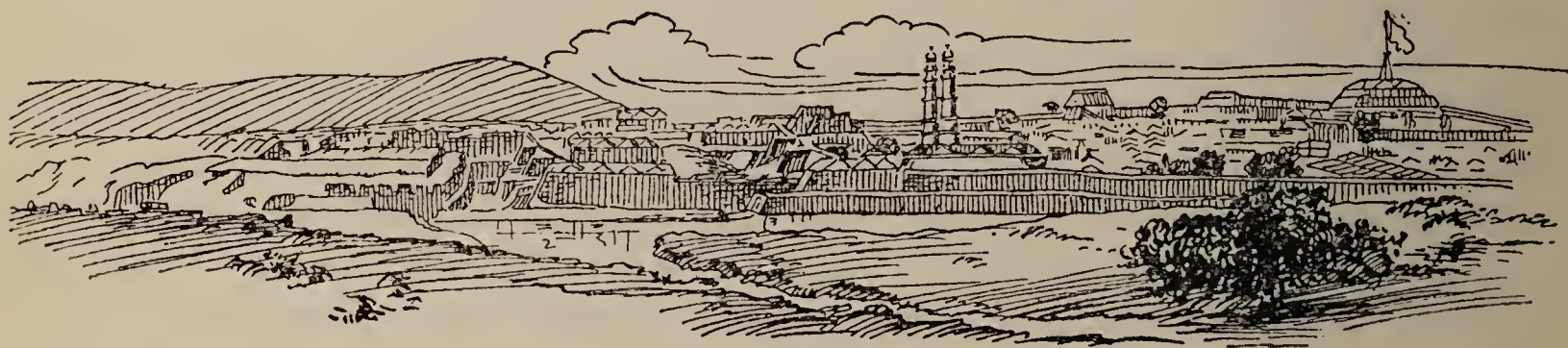
The British answer was decisive. There had been no positive act of war on the part of the Baltic Powers, but it was scarcely possible to wait while they were arranging to place their fleets at the service of France. A fleet was despatched to coerce the Danes, Nelson being second in command with Sir Hyde Parker as his chief. Nelson forced his way into the harbour of Copenhagen, where, after a furious engagement in which he ignored the admiral's signal to retire, the Danes were forced to submission and surrendered their fleet to the British. The Swedes had no inclination to meet with similar treatment, and the assassination of the Tsar placed on the Russian throne the young prince Alexander I., who was completely out of sympathy with his father's policy and very soon made terms with the British.

Ten days before the battle of the Baltic a decisive blow was struck against the French army of occupation in Egypt; Sir Ralph Abercrombie



landed at Aboukir on March 21, and routed the French. Although the gallant general himself was killed, the French troops were shut up in Alexandria, while a Turkish army was besieging Cairo, which was taken in June. Reinforcements from India joined the British force, and Alexandria surrendered in August. The French troops were allowed to return to France, but their ships remained in possession of the victors.

While Bonaparte was scheming for the conquest of India, the British ascendancy there was confirmed, and the British dominion extended by the Governor-General, Lord Mornington, better known as the Marquess Wellesley, the elder brother of the still more famous Duke of Wellington. The rule of Sir John Shore, the successor of Cornwallis, was deficient in firmness, and the native powers, especially Mysore, were developing hopes of overthrowing the British, when Mornington arrived in India just as Bonaparte was preparing to sail for Egypt. Tippu, the Bhonsla, and Sindhia all had forces under French officers; and Tippu at least was



Seringapatam, Tippu's capital, stormed in 1799.

[Taken from a view in Home's "Mysore," Madras, 1794.]

in active correspondence with the French commandant at Mauritius. Mornington acted promptly. He applied immediate pressure to the Nizam, who dismissed his French officers and accepted in place of the force which had been maintained a British contingent—that is to say, a sepoy army with British officers—theoretically for the defence of his dominions against the aggression of native powers; for the maintenance of which force he ceded territory, a system known as that of "subsidiary alliances." Similar pressure was brought to bear upon Sindhia, and then Mornington proceeded against Tippu.

It must be remembered that Tippu's father had usurped the sovereignty of Mysore not forty years before, and that Tippu himself was a fanatical Mohammedan ruling by the sword over subjects who were for the most part Hindus. The war with Tippu was emphatically a war with a dynasty, not with a state; and it was necessitated by the plain fact that Tippu was in alliance with France for the purpose of destroying the British power. Tippu rejected the British ultimatum, and in 1799 the British troops stormed Seringapatam. The Sultan himself was killed. Mornington re-instated the representative of the previous Hindu dynasty as lord of the old Mysore territory, and annexed the rest of Tippu's dominion, though a



portion was restored to the Nizam. These districts, however, were retroceded by him for the permanent maintenance of the protecting British contingent.

The fall of Alexandria was the last phase of the active hostilities. The British were ready enough for peace if they could have it with security; Napoleon wanted it, we are entitled to believe, in order to organise the isolation and coercion of the British, since it was clear enough that as matters stood coercion was not likely to be effective. The preliminaries of peace were agreed upon in October, but the British Government was no longer that of Pitt, who had resigned office in March. The battle of the Baltic was actually fought under the auspices of the Addington administration. Pitt had carried the Treaty of Union with Ireland, but the king's flat refusal to agree to Catholic Emancipation, to which Pitt and some of his colleagues were absolutely pledged as an accompaniment of the Union, compelled the minister and some of his supporters to resign. The change of ministry did not involve transfer of power to the Opposition; it merely meant that Pitt and the colleagues who were pledged to Catholic Emancipation gave a qualified support from outside to their former colleagues, who remained in office with some new associates. The authority and capacity of the new ministry was seriously diminished by the withdrawals; but as the Rockinghams thirty-five years before would have preferred to remain under the leadership of the elder Pitt, so the Addington ministry now would have preferred to remain under the leadership of the younger. The Addington ministry made the peace which became definitive as the Treaty of Amiens in March 1802, but barely two years elapsed before Pitt was recalled to the helm.

The treaty embodied the belief of Pitt himself and of some but by no means all of his former colleagues that the need for war was over, that France and Europe had learnt their lesson, and that a time of general peace and recuperation was at hand. Concession, therefore, was carried so far that Britain agreed to restore all her conquests with the exception of Ceylon and Trinidad. In these restitutions was included that of Cape Colony to the Dutch; it had been ceded by the Stadtholder to prevent its seizure by the French, after his retreat from Holland, but before his government had been technically set aside, and the British had taken possession after a formal show of resistance on the part of the Dutch colonists. It was to be re-occupied later and to remain a permanent British possession. But even before the Treaty of Amiens was signed, it was becoming evident that the peace had in it no element of permanence. The joy with which it was hailed in England was premature.



## III

## IRELAND AND THE UNION

Ireland had achieved legislative independence with the constitution of 1782, confirmed by the Renunciatory Act of the following year. She had refused to surrender any portion of that independence even as the price of the final removal of hampering commercial restrictions. She had asserted it again very emphatically at the time of the Regency Bill, when the Irish parliament, led by Grattan, refused to recognise the right of the parliament at Westminster to control the regency for Ireland, and sent a deputation to London to offer the regency to the Prince of Wales on its own account—a proceeding of which the effectiveness was somewhat damaged by the fact that by the time the deputation reached London the king had been restored to health and there was no regency to offer. The prosperity of the country advanced rapidly during the years of peace, since the concessions already made greatly extended Irish commerce; the paralysis of the Catholic population had at least been diminished by the relaxation of the Penal Code; the spirit of hopefulness stimulated enterprise, and agriculture assumed a new activity.

But an independent parliament could be regarded only as a first step towards the reform of flagrant abuses which powerful interests were still energetic in preserving. The executive was still responsible to the Crown, not to parliament; parliament itself was infinitely less representative of the actual electorate and more subject to the control of corrupt influences than even the parliament at Westminster; and on religious grounds the electorate itself was restricted to the Protestant community, who formed less than a fourth of the population, while the Protestant dissenters were in a worse position than their brethren in England.

The Irish parliament then was in effect controlled by the group whose interest it was to preserve an unreformed representation, while those who desired reform were in disagreement on the Catholic question. This controlling majority was thoroughly loyal to the British connection; but the guarantee of their loyalty was their firm conviction that the Protestant ascendancy, their own ascendancy, rested upon British support. Had Grattan been the leader of a majority the loyalty of the parliament would hardly have been less, for Grattan had a splendid faith in mutual trust and honour as the curative for misunderstandings. For such mutual trust he pleaded earnestly, and on the same principles he desired to place his Catholic fellow-countrymen on the same footing as the Protestants, and to trust in the loyalty which the Catholic gentry had already displayed so conspicuously. Had the Catholic gentry been freely admitted to public life, it is certain that they would have proved themselves worthy of the confi-



dence reposed in them. In short, a reformed Irish parliament would in all probability have been a loyal parliament. But the one reform which was conceded, pressed upon the ascendancy party by Pitt, and accepted by it not without reluctance, was not calculated to improve the position. In 1792 the franchise was extended so as to admit Catholics to the electorate, but they were still excluded from parliament and from office. In other words, the leaders were kept out of active public life and distrusted, while the rank and file were admitted to the franchise.

This measure came just before the declaration of war between France and Great Britain, when the Revolution in France was already unmistakably triumphant, and the French Revolution, following upon the American Revolution, had sown dangerous seed in Ireland. For there a fruitful soil was provided among the Protestant dissenters with their Puritan tradition, the Catholic proletariat with its ill-defined but acute consciousness of oppression, and an agrarian population which, whether Protestant or Catholic, had a lively sense of hostility to the landlords and still more to the middlemen—a chain of whom was generally interposed between the absentee landlords and tenantry. It was to this community of interests hostile to the existing order that the young lawyer Wolfe Tone appealed when he started the Society of the United Irishmen in 1791.

Wolfe Tone himself was imbued with many of the ideas of the French Revolution, and his own ultimate aim was to create an Irish republic. But these aims were not yet to be acknowledged. The first thing was to get rid of dissension and unite the Irish people in a demand for the redress of grievances. The time had not yet come for treating the British connection as the root cause of the grievances. The Protestant population were to combine with the Catholics in a demand for full political rights irrespective of religion, and the Society of the United Irishmen, with its starting-point among the Protestants of Ulster, virtually leagued itself with the "Catholic Committee," which had been in existence for more than thirty years. That committee had already changed its character, having become democratised by the secession from it of many Catholics who had taken alarm at the anti-clerical aspects of the French Revolution. On the other hand, while the active propaganda of the new movement was accompanied by an increase of agrarian disturbance, it intensified also the repressive activities of the ascendancy party which dominated both parliament and the executive.

In 1795 a new viceroy, Lord Fitzwilliam, realised the essential justice of the Catholic demands, and reform seemed to be at hand; but the ascendancy group, led by the Chancellor Fitzgibbon, proved too strong for him. Fitzwilliam was recalled, Fitzgibbon was made Earl of Clare, and in his hands the new viceroy, Lord Camden, virtually placed himself. And now a fresh element of chaos was introduced by a revival of religious animosities. The Protestants associated with the United Irish Movement were in the main, though not exclusively, Presbyterians. But in the



popular terminology of the day, Protestants meant the preponderant body who belonged to the Established Church and were free from political disabilities. These Ulster Protestants formed the opposition societies called the "Peep o' Day Boys," a name which gave place to that of "Orangemen" in commemoration of William of Orange. For the past four years the Peep o' Day Boys had been in frequent collision with the supporters of the United Irishmen; and now the Orange society developed a sort of crusade against the Catholic peasantry, with the result that large numbers all over Ireland began to enroll themselves in the Society of United Irishmen, which welcomed them with open arms.

Nevertheless, Catholic Ireland was not at this time ripe for rebellion, though Wolfe Tone imagined that it was. He betook himself to France, dropped the mask, and had no difficulty in persuading the French government to despatch a large expedition under the command of Hoche to land in Ireland. It was the moment when British naval ascendancy was still in the balance, just before Jervis's victory at Cape St. Vincent. The expedition did not land; it was driven off by tempests. But it is remarkable that when its arrival was hourly expected there was no sign of a rising in Ireland itself.

Still, through 1797, while the religious strife raged chiefly in Ulster, the organisers of rebellion were arming and drilling constantly increasing numbers of the Catholic peasantry. On the other hand, the Government adopted vigorous repressive measures for the seizure of arms and the insurrectionary ringleaders; and this work was done chiefly by the Ulster yeomanry, who were in fact Orange volunteers imbued with the passions of the religious strife. All the progress towards harmony, of which there had seemed to be such high promise when Grattan's parliament was created, was done away with, and all the old animosities were again raised to their highest pitch. The unrestrained brutalities of the government soldiery were answered by deeds of corresponding savagery. There was no one to control, to organise, or to restrain the insurrectionary movement, because the Government had seized its chiefs; and in May 1798 a desperate but abortive rebellion blazed out in the counties of Wicklow and Wexford, where the struggle was practically between Catholics and Protestants without qualification.

The suppression of the insurrection was secured by the decisive defeat of the insurgents at Vinegar Hill; and the fortunate appointment of Cornwallis, the former Governor-General of India, as Lord-Lieutenant, insured that so far as lay in his power the final suppression of the rebellion would be conducted as leniently as possible. But the whole episode was made hideous by barbarous conduct on both sides, though it was accompanied by redeeming deeds of heroic courage. Nor was it possible even for Cornwallis to prevent continued excesses on the part of the side which had won. And Grattan's parliament had failed so utterly to fulfil Grattan's own hopes, it had become so completely the instrument of the oligarchy, that Grattan himself had seceded from it in despair.



One more incident of the rebellion is to be noted. France did not repeat the attempt of 1796, and Bonaparte was absorbed in the Egyptian expedition. Nevertheless a small French force was landed in the west; its leader, General Humbert, scattered a large force of militia which was despatched against him, at what was called the "Race of Castlebar," and he was able to give a good deal of trouble before he was finally forced to surrender. But practically outside the counties of Wicklow and Wexford the insurrection never made head.

The conclusion forced upon Cornwallis in Ireland and upon Pitt in England was that the sister island would never have a healthy government except through an incorporating union with Great Britain. The complete absorption of power by the Irish oligarchy, their provocative oppression before the rebellion, and their tyrannous abuse of their position when it was over, were condemned by Cornwallis in the strongest terms, though perhaps his condemnation was more inclusive and more sweeping than the circumstances altogether warranted. But the outstanding fact remained that government by the oligarchy was intolerable, and would inevitably keep the country in a state of seething sedition. On the other hand, if the very much larger subject population were admitted to political equality, they in their turn would be overwhelmingly predominant, and would show very little mercy in penalising their former rulers for all the misdeeds of the past. An incorporating union would give the control to the parliament at Westminster, which could deal out even-handed justice, since it would be dominated by neither of the Irish parties; and at the same time there would be no Nationalist grievance, because Ireland would stand on the same footing in the Imperial parliament as England and Scotland—a very different thing from the state of affairs before 1782, when a British parliament in which Ireland was unrepresented actively controlled the government of Ireland. An incorporating union therefore was the condition without which it was vain to hope for a loyal and peaceful Ireland.

But neither Pitt nor Cornwallis imagined that a union would of itself suffice to make Ireland peaceful and loyal. There was in any case the initial difficulty that the Irish Nationalist sentiment was as strong as it had been in Scotland at the beginning of the century. The majority of Irishmen from Grattan himself down believed that the country could work out its own salvation under a reformed government; that is, the leaders of Irish opinion believed that if the grievances of the Catholic population were removed and the parliament were made truly representative, the vengeful spirit would fade, animosities would die down, and Ireland would justify the confidence that had been reposed in her. The mere fact that these leaders resented the loss of independence made it all the more imperative, if Irish loyalty was to be attained, that a union should be accompanied by the decisive removal of grievances. The fatal defect of the Union was that Pitt, aware of this necessity, allowed it to be understood in Ireland that the Act of Union would be accompanied by the removal of the acknowledged



grievances, without himself taking steps to make the reforms an integral part of the Union. And when the Union had been carried, the English minister found himself brought up against the blank wall of the king's absolute refusal to remedy the grievances of the Catholics. Pitt and others salved their consciences by resignation, but that was the end. Pitt gave the king his promise not to raise the question again, and he returned to office when his presence was again imperatively needed at the helm, without making the fulfilment of his pledges a condition.

The proposal for an incorporating union was approved by large majorities at Westminster, but was virtually defeated—that is, it was passed by a majority of only one—in the Irish House of Commons when introduced in 1799 by Lord Castlereagh, who was chief secretary to Cornwallis. But Pitt, bent on the measure, decided that the assent of the Irish parliament must be obtained at whatever cost. Cornwallis, the most straightforward of statesmen, certainly believed that he had authority to obtain the support of Catholic opinion by at least implying that the religious grievance would be removed. But the vital matter was to procure a majority in parliament. Pitt and his most effective agent, Castlereagh, were entirely opposed to testing public opinion by a general election. The simpler plan was followed of applying a vigorous and unqualified corruption to convert opponents of the measure into friends. Peerages, places, and pensions were lavishly promised or scattered; there may not have been bribery in the most literal sense, but every man who had his price obtained it. In the year 1800 the Acts of Union were passed both by the British and Irish parliaments, and in 1801 the first parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland met at Westminster.

The Act united the legislatures, giving Ireland one hundred representatives; the Irish peers elected twenty-eight representatives of their number to sit in the House of Lords, while those who were excluded from that chamber were eligible to the House of Commons for any English or Scottish constituencies; and Ireland was to contribute two-seventeenths to the imperial revenue. But she still remained with a separate administration and a separate judicial system, with her effective government controlled by the viceroy, who himself continued to be influenced mainly by the ascendancy party; and if she was at last and decisively freed from all commercial restrictions and placed on the same footing as the sister island, the pledges to the Catholics were ignored, and their grievances, with those of the Protestant dissenters, remained unremedied. As for the reform of representation, that could hardly have been carried out without corresponding reforms in England, where the fear of the French Revolution, of Jacobinism and anarchy, deferred any such measure for a generation.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE STRUGGLE WITH NAPOLEON

#### I

#### THE BLACK SHADOW AND TRAFALGAR

THE British people were anxious for peace, anxious to believe that a durable peace was possible. It accepted the Treaty of Amiens with satisfaction, willing to surrender very much for the sake of a general pacification. But Grenville and others of Pitt's former colleagues looked askance, mistrusting the First Consul, who, they believed, would merely make use of the peace in order to strengthen his own position and that of France, and then turn upon Great Britain. The omens which had even preceded the ratification of the treaty were verified by the further consolidation of the French ascendancy in the lately created republics outside the French frontiers, and in the First Consul's assumption of authority in dealing with the minor German states. The French ascendancy was used to enforce the exclusion of British goods from the ports of the dependents of France. French agents for commercial purposes visited Ireland and made themselves familiar with British ports; the commercial character of the agents was more than dubious. An official "commercial" report regarding Egypt was much more concerned with the facilities for reconquest than with its ostensible subject.

Protest on the part of Great Britain as to the actions of the Republic on the Continent were in effect met by saying that they were none of England's business; and by angry complaints that the French émigrés were allowed scandalously to traduce the First Consul in the British Press, and that the British were abstaining from their obligation under the Treaty of Amiens to evacuate Malta. There was some technical warrant for Napoleon's attitude, but it was no less evident that he was violating the understandings upon which the treaty had been made. In plain terms



George III.

[After the painting by Sir William Beechey.]



it was soon impossible to doubt that Napoleon was determined to rule Britain out of all voice in European affairs, to ruin her commerce by a policy of exclusion, and to enforce her submission by war if she refused it on any other terms. The price was more than she chose to pay. Reluctantly but with grim resolution the country made up its mind to a combat *à outrance*, in which it very soon felt itself to be fighting not only for its own existence but for the liberties of Europe dominated by the will of a military despot. Fourteen months after the Treaty of Amiens war was once more declared between France and the British Empire, a war in which there was no longer any pretence that France was the champion of liberty, equality, and fraternity; it was a war for the destruction of the British Empire, and its vindictive character was signalled at the outset by the First Consul's decree for the immediate arrest and detention as prisoners of war of all British subjects then travelling in France.

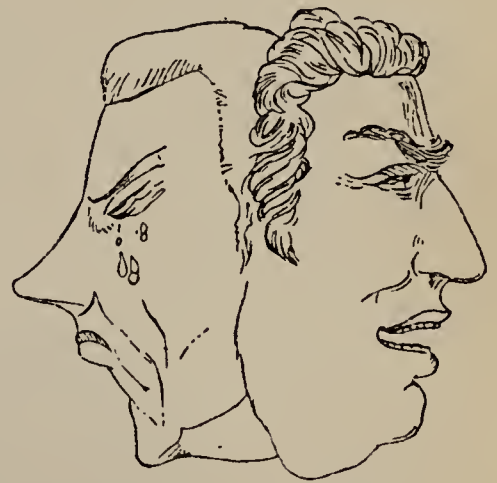
Now there was only one possible method by which Great Britain, single-handed, could strike at France, and that was by crippling her marine and destroying her seaborne commerce. The invasion of France by a British army was unthinkable. There were two methods by which France with or without allies could seek to strike at Britain, invasion and the destruction of her commerce by its exclusion from Europe. For two years and a half both plans were in operation, until invasion was made once for all impossible by Nelson's last victory of Trafalgar, which therefore terminates the first phase of the war. But Napoleon had not yet learnt, nor did he ever learn, the inherent futility of attempting to annihilate British commerce without destroying the British naval supremacy; because that supremacy gave her in effect a complete monopoly of the seaborne trade of the world. Europe could not do without goods which could only be brought to her by British ships. Even if European governments were willing, European ports could not be closed so as to block the entry of commodities which Europe could not and would not do without. The fact had been illustrated during the nine years of the first war, when, as in the Seven Years' War, British commerce had persistently expanded. It was to be proved to demonstration in the second war, when British commerce continued to expand and Europe continued to be flooded with British goods, even after there was scarcely a port on the whole European seaboard which was not theoretically closed to British merchandise.

During the first phase of the war then, while the French control of ports outside the French dominion was limited, it was palpable that British commerce could at the worst be only hampered. The British fleets swept the seas with none to say them nay; and they continued to assert the right of search and the inclusive doctrines as to contraband of war which had been protested against by the Armed Neutrality in 1780 and in 1801 as destructive of the legitimate trade of neutrals. Napoleon's grand object during this time was to effect an invasion of England, and for two years and a half that black shadow hung over the country. Across the



Channel troops were collected, and flotillas were gathered, to be in readiness to embark the troops at a moment's notice and hurl them upon the English shore. The project did not alarm the British Admiralty, which was satisfied that its own dispositions made invasion impossible. The mastery of the sea was secure. Even if the incredible should occur and for a few days there should be no force in the Channel to repel invasion, so that the French flotillas might succeed in effecting a crossing unmolested, their communications would at once be cut and the invading force would soon find itself helpless. Napoleon seems to have believed in the possibility of making the army of invasion live upon the invaded country. But England would not have been easily conquered at a blow; for besides the regular troops who were within the four seas and the partly trained militia, vast numbers of the civil population were under arms drilling and training as volunteers, while it does not appear that Napoleon ever had more than a hundred thousand men, if so many, ready for embarkation. So while there was no little popular alarm, and the coming of "Boney" was awaited with nervous anticipation, the Admiralty were under no apprehensions. The fleet in home waters was a more than sufficient guard. It was Napoleon's dream that the rest of the British fleet might be enticed away, and that in its absence French fleets might be so combined as to secure the mastery of the Channel at least for a time; but the dream was chimerical, as the event demonstrated. For two years French and British lay facing each other on the Channel watching and waiting before any further attempt could be made to carry out Napoleon's plan, and then it broke down utterly and ruinously.

Within a few months after the declaration of war, an abortive insurrection in Ireland stirred up by the enthusiast, Robert Emmet, was easily suppressed. But the Addington ministry was tottering, and Pitt's resumption of the leadership was imperatively called for. It was his own wish to emphasise the national character of the struggle by forming not a party but a national ministry, which should include both Fox, who had persistently opposed the first war, and Grenville, who had opposed the peace. Fox, although the king flatly refused to admit him to the ministry, urged his own followers to support the Government. Grenville himself refused to take office, and after all the strength of Pitt's Cabinet lay entirely in Pitt himself. But if his leadership inspired the country with confidence, it was nevertheless not to him but to the admirable strategical arrangements for which the chief credit at the finish was due to Lord Barham at the Admiralty, that Great Britain owed her security. The French ports were blockaded not in the sense that an attempt was made to keep them sealed up, but in the sense that it was hardly possible for any squadron to



The Double-Headed Government.

[A caricature of the alliance of Pitt and Fox, from Jaime's "Musée de la Caricature."]



put to sea without being detected and overpowered ; and at the same time there were complete arrangements for a concentration of forces in case any accident should render such a step necessary. Nelson was in charge in the Mediterranean ; Admiral Cornwallis, the brother of the Marquess, kept watch over Brest ; and it was unlikely that a fleet would get out from either Brest or Toulon without being forced to one of the decisive actions which were the constant desire of British admirals.

Pitt, however, was not satisfied with watching and waiting. As before, he bent his efforts to the formation of a new coalition. Almost at the moment of Pitt's return to office, Europe was standing aghast at the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, the representative of the junior branch of the Bourbons, who had been trapped on German soil, carried over the French frontier, and shot after a mock trial by a military commission. Two months after the murder Napoleon was proclaimed Emperor, and the French Republic was at an end, as it had been in fact if not in name ever since Napoleon became First Consul. The crime excited the deep indignation of the Russian Tsar ; while the proclamation of the new Empire was alarming to the head of the historic Holy Roman Empire. The Powers began to arm, though Russia was the only one of them which as yet was thoroughly determined upon war. Napoleon's ambitions were emphasised when the North Italian Republic invited him to become its king and he accepted the invitation. The dependent republics were forced to re-organise themselves at his dictation. But it was not till April of 1805 that Russia and Great Britain formed a definite league to which Austria was immediately added ; while Prussia, which hoped to get Hanover from Napoleon (who had taken possession of it) as a reward of neutrality, still held aloof. On the other hand, Napoleon forced upon Spain a new treaty which placed her fleet at his disposal. To all appearance he paid little attention to the new coalition, but was engaged upon preparing the stroke which was to clear the way for the invasion of England.

The plan was that Admiral Villeneuve should sail from Toulon, pick up Spanish reinforcements, decoy Nelson away to the West Indies and leave him there, and then return to co-operate with the Brest fleet in crushing Cornwallis and clearing the Channel. Villeneuve succeeded in carrying out a part of his programme. He slipped out of Toulon, evaded Nelson, attached a Spanish squadron at Cadiz, and made for the West Indies. Nelson, after starting on a false scent, went in pursuit, leaving Collingwood behind to keep ward over Cadiz. The quarry escaped him, but a swift brig carried warning to England ; the Channel fleet was concentrated at the west of the Channel, and Calder was detached from Ferrol with thirteen ships of the line to deal with Villeneuve, who had twenty. Nelson, meanwhile, was on his way back to join Collingwood's squadron at Cadiz. Calder found Villeneuve off Cape Finisterre and engaged him. The battle itself was not of a decisive character, but was decisive in its effects, since Villeneuve ran for Corunna, and Calder returned to the main fleet, to be



court-martialled for having been contented with the capture of two ships. By this time Nelson had already joined Collingwood; and Napoleon's great naval *coup* was completely brought to nought. Nelson himself returned home for a few weeks, while Villeneuve gave up all idea of raising the blockade of Brest, and turned his attentions towards Cadiz. Calder's action was fought on July 22nd. On August 15th Villeneuve sailed



Lord Nelson.

[From the painting by Sir William Beechey, R.A.]

from Corunna for Cadiz, and on September 29th Nelson rejoined Collingwood.

Stirred by bitter taunts flung at him by the Emperor, Villeneuve put to sea with thirty-three ships of the line, French and Spanish, and five frigates. Nelson, with twenty-seven ships, caught him on October 21st off Trafalgar between Cadiz and Gibraltar. Nelson was to windward, with a north-west wind to carry him down on the enemy's line, which was heading from south to north. As at the Nile, he resolved to use his opportunity to annihilate the Franco-Spanish fleet in spite of its superior numbers. The



method of the attack was unusual but decisive. Nelson's fleet bore down in two parallel lines, headed by Nelson himself and by Collingwood, almost at right angles to the French line, which was pierced at two points. The van was cut off and kept out of action, while the centre and rear were shattered by Nelson and Collingwood, every ship being taken or destroyed. Even the van could not escape completely, since four of them were taken

besides the eighteen prizes secured in the main action. The victory was absolutely overwhelming. The British supremacy had never in fact been seriously endangered for a moment since the battle of Camperdown; the work had been completed by Nelson in the bay of Aboukir. Trafalgar made an end of all serious resistance to the British monopoly of the seas. It was the last real naval action of the war, because after it there was no navy to fight. Nevertheless the victory was dearly bought at the price of the death of him who by universal assent is accounted the greatest sea-captain that the world has known. Nelson's career of glory had reached its glorious close.

The triumph of Trafalgar dispersed once for all that shadow of invasion which had hung over England. But Napoleon, the world at large, even perhaps Britain herself, were made blind to its decisiveness by the crushing of the



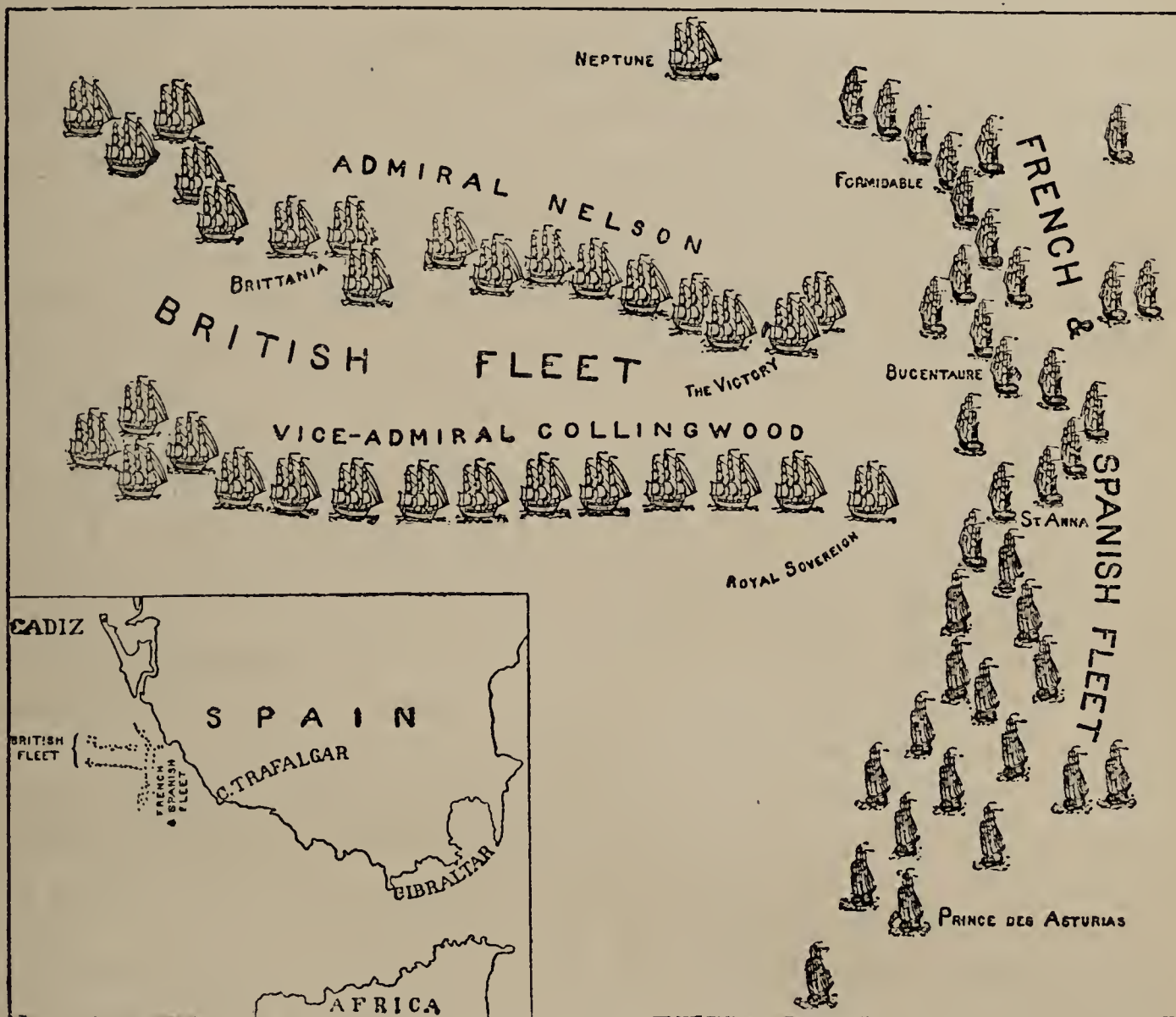
Admiral Lord Collingwood.

European coalition at Austerlitz. When Villeneuve sailed from Corunna for Cadiz instead of for Brest, the Emperor of the French saw that his dream of an invasion of England had melted into air. With characteristic promptitude he turned upon the foes who were slowly gathering against him in the east. The Austrians had massed an advance army at Ulm. The Russian armies were still far away. The German principalities which lay between the French frontier and Ulm were already virtually under Napoleon's heel. He poured his armies through their territories, swooped upon Ulm, and compelled the whole Austrian force there to capitulate on the day before Trafalgar was fought.

The way lay open to Vienna, which was soon occupied; but the



Russians were now advancing, and the rest of the Austrian army, which had fallen back, moved to join them. On December 2nd, at Austerlitz, Napoleon won what was perhaps the most brilliant of all his victories over the combination of Russians and Austrians. The Russians retreated; the Austrian resistance was annihilated. Prussia, which had just resolved to join the coalition, returned to its attitude of neutrality, and Napoleon's triumph on the Continent was complete. "Roll up that map of Europe," said Pitt; "it will not be wanted again for ten years." His own end was



The Battle of Trafalgar, October 21, 1805.

very near. On January 23, 1806, three months and two days after Trafalgar, the great English statesman, whose last years had been devoted to the struggle with France, followed to the grave the great English sailor who had struck for Britain the decisive blow in the struggle.

## II

### THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

The death of Pitt necessitated the formation of a new ministry on the lines which Pitt himself had desired when he took office for the last time.



The king himself could no longer resist the inclusion of Fox in a National government. Grenville was the head of the "Ministry of all the Talents." But eight months after his great rival Fox too died. In these last months of his life he saw secured one great reform upon which his heart had long been set. The resolutions demanding the abolition of the slave trade were at last carried in both Houses, though the consequent Act was not passed until Fox had disappeared from the scene. But Fox learnt in office the vanity of his persistent hope and belief that a durable peace could be made with Napoleon. The Emperor had no objection to negotiations, but he had no intention of being balked or hampered in carrying out the smallest fragment of his ambitious designs. From Austerlitz onwards, through 1806 at least, Napoleon's career was one of steady and successful aggression with only one unimportant check. Prussia very soon accepted his conditions and closed her ports to British trade, getting Hanover as her reward. The Bourbon dynasty was again driven out of Naples and retained only the island of Sicily under British protection. The mainland was made a kingdom for Napoleon's brother Joseph; Holland with enlarged borders was made a kingdom for another brother, Louis. The Rhine states of the Empire were formed into the Confederation of the Rhine, with duchies and principalities distributed among Napoleon's marshals. The Holy Roman Empire was formally dissolved; the Austrian Emperor was the Austrian Emperor and nothing more. The king of Prussia at last awoke to the fact that the French Emperor was playing with him; too late he challenged his mighty adversary, and in October Prussia was brought completely under Napoleon's heel by the victories of Jena and Auerstadt. Frederick William had to fall back upon Russian support.

The negotiations with Fox broke down over the English minister's refusal to cede Sicily or to desert the Tsar. But the Ministry of all the Talents, failing through no fault of its own to procure an honourable peace, did not understand the conduct of war. It clung to the old tradition of sending here and there desultory expeditions with no chance of accomplishing permanent results. Thus it sent to Southern Italy a force under General Stuart, who won at Maida a victory over a superior force of French veterans, which somewhat raised the prestige of British troops and lowered that of the French; but the success was not followed up and the expedition was withdrawn. Another expedition sent to Buenos Ayres by way of striking a blow at the Spanish government in South America ended in ignominious disaster in 1807. The one distinctive gain to the British Empire in 1806 was the effective re-occupation of Cape Colony, which Fox refused to surrender.

Six months after Fox's death the Grenville ministry resigned, in March 1807, on a constitutional question. Defeated by the king's rejection of a proposal to admit Roman Catholics to commissions in the Army and Navy, it formally refused the king's demand that it should pledge itself not to raise the question again. Resolutions declaring the right of the



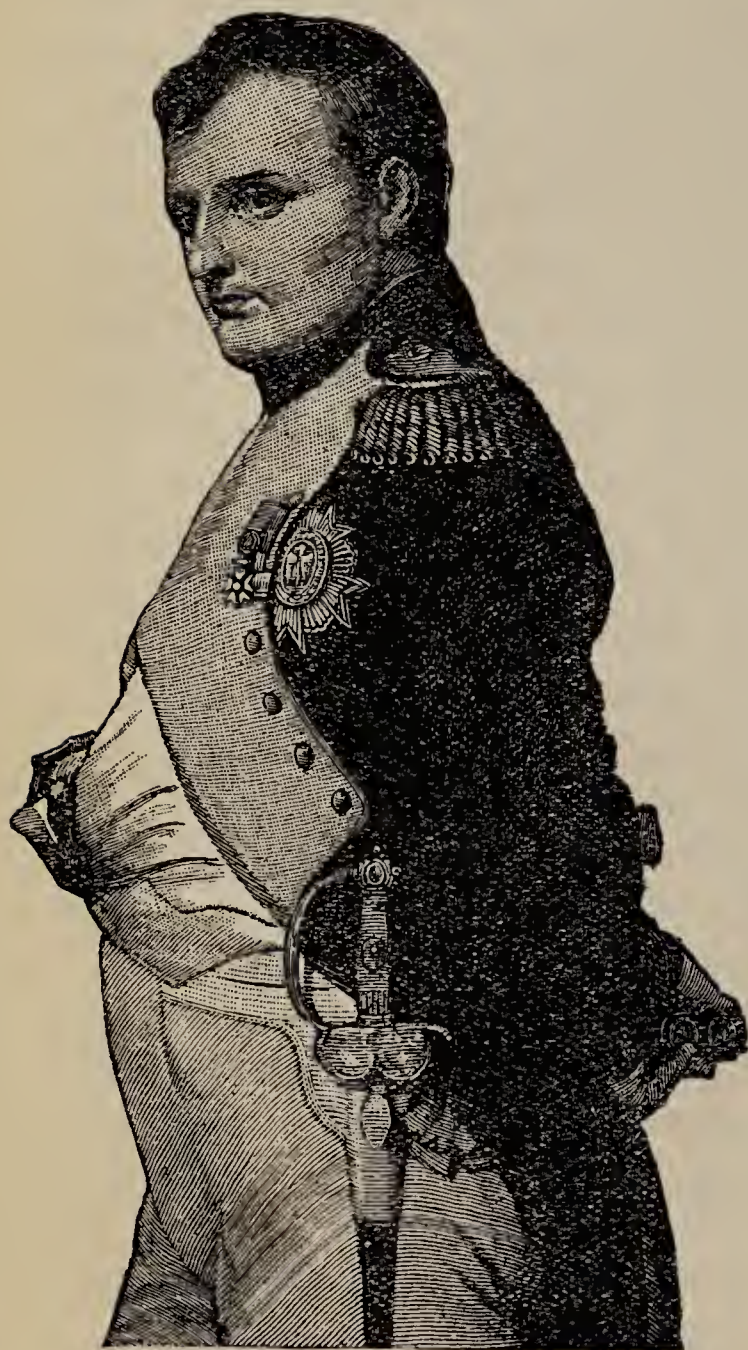
ministry to tender advice at its own discretion were shelved, the ministry resigned, and reactionary Toryism was established in power for twenty years. During those twenty years the strifes and divisions, as under the long Whig ascendancy of the last century, were not strifes of party principle but of antagonistic personalities. But the events of 1806 had the effect of removing the last shred of doubt that the struggle with Napoleon would have to be fought out to the bitter end, and also of bringing home a new conviction that Napoleon was not to be defeated by the old system of alliances with continental dynasties. Pitt had grasped the fact before his death. Dynastic interests would never form a solid ground for a combination which could hold Napoleon permanently in check. Napoleon meant to be master of Europe, and only when nations, not dynasties, rose against the oppressor would combinations be effective. To national uprisings Britain would give her hearty support, but she would no longer devote herself to forming coalitions of the old type.

Already, in 1806, Napoleon struck the first blow which was intended to bring the "nation of shopkeepers" to its knees. When after Jena Napoleon conducted his triumphal progress through Prussia to Berlin, he issued from the Prussian capital the Berlin Decree which was to annihilate British commerce. Every port in every dependent state and in every state in alliance with France was to be closed to British goods. It was tolerably apparent that every state which did not so close its ports would very soon be treated by France as an enemy. The British Government responded with the Orders in Council, declaring all ports so closed to be in a state of blockade, and therefore not open to any commerce at all. Further Napoleonic decrees were met by further Orders in Council of the same drastic type. British action was of course represented as having for its purpose the destruction of all neutral commerce and the appropriation of the trade of the world. That was very nearly the effect, but it was not the intention. The Orders in Council were measures of war. The conquest was a plain trial of strength. If Europe could preserve her commerce while excluding the British at the dictation of Napoleon, the British Empire would be ruined; if she could not, the British Empire would not be ruined; but European commerce would, and Europe would feel that she owed her woes to the dictatorship of Napoleon. The commercial war would be a means to excite Europe to shake itself free from the Napoleonic yoke.

Early in 1807 Napoleon received a check from the Russians in alliance with the Prussian king at the battle of Eylau; but four months later he won a decisive victory at Friedland, which, with other circumstances, caused the Tsar to change his policy. Alexander was angry with Britain, which, owing chiefly to inefficiency in the administration, had failed to send him the support he expected. His alliance with Prussia, now absolutely at Napoleon's mercy, was of no use to him. The two Emperors met and held a secret conclave on a raft in midstream at Tilsit, where they made a compact under which the Tsar was to unite with his new ally in com-



selling the still neutral minor states to close their ports, while his own were also to be closed, to the British. Prussia was shorn of its western territories, out of which a kingdom of Westphalia was patched up for still another of Napoleon's brothers, Jerome, while her annexations in Poland were taken away and converted into the grand duchy of Warsaw.



The Emperor Napoleon.  
[From the painting by Delaroche.]

George Canning, however, received information of the secret articles of the treaty; he had become Foreign Secretary on the fall of the Grenville ministry. Although it was impossible to produce any public justification, he promptly despatched an expedition to Denmark, offering her the British alliance, and demanding as on the previous occasion that she should surrender her fleet into British keeping. It was the obvious intention of the new alliance to absorb all the European fleets; and, in view of the danger, Canning had no hesitation in ignoring customary rules. Denmark refused. Copenhagen was bombarded; Denmark yielded, and her fleet was carried off. It may be doubted whether Britain had anything serious to fear from any possible combination of foreign navies, and whether she did not rather lose by making Danish sentiment bitterly hostile and by violating the accepted conventions which are called the Public Law of Europe. But the danger was there, and Canning's action put an end to it.

Napoleon, like Canning himself, certainly believed that the high-handed action of the British minister had gone far to foil his plans; for his indignation was genuine, and was certainly not in fact based, as he professed, on his respect for the Public Law of Europe, which he only recognised himself when it suited him. His denunciations were made scarcely more convincing by the coercion which he applied to Portugal to bring it within the ring-fence of his Continental System, the name he gave to the scheme for the exclusion of British commerce. A French army under Junot marched into Portugal; but the royal family, instead of submitting to Napoleon, embarked upon British ships and betook itself to the great Portuguese colony of Brazil. Canning's coercion of Denmark, though it failed to bring about the alliance with the Northern Powers for which he had hoped, had the very clear justification that it might at least be regarded



as a necessary act of self-defence. It was not possible to apply a similar defence to Napoleon's seizure of Portugal.

Before the end of the year, then, Russia had declared war upon Britain, and there was scarcely a free port left along the whole European coastline from which British goods were not excluded. It is an ironical commentary on Napoleon's programme that he found himself obliged to grant licences to purchase and sell British goods, both manufactures and raw materials, which the Continent could not produce out of its own resources; while smuggling, if a dangerous business, became both a very extensive and a very lucrative one.

The seizure of Portugal, where Junot very soon set aside the Portuguese government and took over the administration, was the first step towards the opening of an entirely new phase in the war. It is probable that Napoleon was already resolved to annex Spain as well as Portugal to the French Empire. The royal family of Spain played into his hands. The king, Charles IV., the queen, the heir-apparent Ferdinand, and the minister Godoy, formed perhaps a group as despicable as any which ever held in its hands the government of a great nation. The Crown Prince and the minister, the queen's favourite, were very much at feud. Both parties intrigued with the French Emperor, who found in the Portuguese troubles a sufficient excuse for throwing French troops into Spain. These were at first rather welcomed by the populace, who imagined that they had come to take the part of Ferdinand, who was popular simply for the reason that Godoy was detested. But Napoleon enticed both the king and his son over the border to Bayonne, where both became parties to a compact by which both king and prince abdicated the Spanish throne; whereupon Napoleon proclaimed his own brother Joseph king of Spain, transferring him thither from Naples, while he passed on the crown of Naples to his brother-in-law, Joachim Murat.

It was a simple and easy bargain, but it left out of count the possibility that the Spanish people might have something to say. They had. They regarded Joseph Bonaparte as a usurper and Ferdinand's abdication as having been extorted from him by force. In every province the people rose in arms, and committees called juntas were formed to conduct resistance to the usurper. Before the end of July a considerable French force was compelled to capitulate to the insurgents at Baylen. Napoleon discovered that Spain would have to be conquered before his brother could occupy the throne. He did not anticipate much difficulty in the task; but he had never before had to overcome a fiercely hostile people, and he had never before had to do battle with an efficient British army. Both those experiences were before him now and made havoc of his calculations.



## III

## THE PENINSULA WAR

Portugal had palpably and unmistakably been coerced ; the national government had in no sense accepted the French supremacy, it had merely submitted to irresistibly superior force. As Portugal's ally, Britain had full warrant for intervening. Technically the case was different with Spain. Formally the Bourbon dynasty had abdicated of its own free will, and the new king had been elected by a body masquerading as a national assembly. Technically therefore the Spanish insurgents were rebels. But this did not prevent the British Government from recognising its opportunity and espousing their cause. The capitulation of Baylen gave promise that the Spaniards would not collapse, that they were embarking on an adventure which was not altogether desperate ; and the rising of the Spaniards encouraged the idea of helping Portugal to break from the bonds which had just been imposed upon her. The country would be entirely friendly, and the British command of the sea secured free entry and uninterrupted communication, whereas French armies could only get to Portugal through hostile Spanish territory. If Portugal were secured it would become a base whence the Spanish insurgents could be supported and helped to eject the French. The Peninsula War, which began with the landing of British troops in Portugal on August 13, 1808, was a new departure. For the first time a British army under a British general was about to take the lead in a land war against a European power. Even in Marlborough's day that great general's achievements were only in part due to the British army. The British did not fight their battles single-handed ; but in the Peninsula, although invaluable service was rendered in the war by the Spanish guerillas, Wellington's own battles were fought and won by British troops who received practically no assistance from the Spanish regulars who were acting with them. Hitherto throughout the great struggle with France, at any rate for a hundred years, nearly all the British honours had fallen to British seamen. Now that there were no honours left for British seamen to win, British soldiers took their share, not in India and America only but in Europe.

The British force of twelve thousand men was under the immediate command of Sir Arthur Wellesley, as yet known only as a "sepoy general," on account of his brilliant services in India during his brother's Governor-Generalship, to which we shall presently revert. Reinforcements were following under Sir John Moore, but the two commanders were to be subordinate to two senior officers, Sir Harry Burrard and Sir Hew Dalrymple, when they should arrive in the Peninsula. Wellesley landed at the mouth of the Mondego, marched towards Lisbon, and was met by Junot at Vimiero.



Junot attacked and was repulsed. Wellesley was confident that, left to himself, he could have crushed him. But the pursuit was stopped by the arrival of Burrard and Dalrymple in succession. Reinforced by Moore, the army continued its march upon Lisbon, and the senior generals agreed to the convention of Cintra, which permitted the whole French force to evacuate Portugal and to be simply carried back by sea to France in British ships; at the same time a Russian fleet, blockaded in the Tagus, was compelled to surrender. British public opinion was enraged at the easy terms granted to the French.

Dalrymple, Burrard, and Wellesley were all recalled for an enquiry, and the command in Portugal, now clear of the French, was left to Sir John Moore. Happily the enquiry completely cleared Wellesley of responsibility for the convention itself and for the failure to make the victory of Vimiero complete, and he returned to take up the command again in the following spring.

Meanwhile Napoleon, who was as angry with Junot as the British were with their generals, resolved to carry out the conquest of Spain in person. The trouble in Spain, in his eyes, was merely an interruption to his scheme for dominating the rest of Europe, for which one decisive campaign would set him free. He seemed likely to carry out his programme, for the armies of the Spanish insurgents were quickly scattered, and by the end of November Joseph Bonaparte was restored to the throne in Madrid. But the Emperor's apparently easy triumph was made vain by Sir John Moore's brilliant diversion in the North. Marching with twenty thousand men from Portugal, he struck at the French line of communication with the Pyrenees. Napoleon would not himself wait to crush the audacious Scot, but hurried back to France, leaving the operations in Spain to Soult. As Soult advanced, Moore retreated. His one object had been to draw off a large French army in pursuit, whereby it would become impossible for the French to secure their mastery in the South. The move was entirely successful. The retreat to the coast, where a British flotilla was to take off the army at Corunna, was an operation of extreme difficulty and danger carried out with great skill. At the last moment Sir John had to turn at bay at Corunna, where Soult was decisively beaten off, and the embarkation was effected. But the battle cost England the life of the great soldier, who was buried on the field of victory.



Sir John Moore.

[From an engraving after a sketch portrait.]



Moore's diversion had made it necessary for the French to do the business of suppressing Spain all over again. Sundry of Napoleon's marshals and a quarter of a million soldiers were left in the Peninsula, but Napoleon himself was taken up with other affairs. Austria, calculating that any successes would lead to a general German uprising, declared war, and the first movements seemed to promise well. But before the anticipated uprising took place Napoleon himself was in the field. By the middle of May he was in Vienna, and in the first week of July his victory at Wagram, although very far from being a crushing one, induced Austria to change her policy and in effect to submit. The Treaty of Vienna in October deprived her of extensive districts, cutting her off completely from the sea, and rewarding Bavaria at her expense. It was followed by a further humiliation, since Napoleon demanded and obtained the hand of an Austrian princess, Marie Louise, in marriage, divorcing his wife Josephine for that purpose.

Napoleon also in this year, 1810, deposed his brother Louis from the throne of Holland, chiefly for resisting the order to exclude British commerce, whereby Holland was being ruined. Holland itself and with it or after it all the coastal districts of North Germany were incorporated with France. But this involved the annexation of Oldenburg, which, for personal reasons, deeply offended the Russian Tsar, who had for some time past been increasingly irritated by Napoleon's proceedings. In December 1810 the Tsar expressed his displeasure by withdrawing from the Continental System and opening his ports to British commerce. From that time the coercion of Russia became Napoleon's great object, because his whole policy for the destruction of England depended upon making the Continental System complete. The coercion of Russia took final shape in that terrible Moscow expedition of 1812, which was the beginning of the end of Napoleon's power. This sketch has been necessary, in order to explain why Napoleon never himself took in hand the business of annihilating the British in the Peninsula, but left the work to his marshals—every one of whom found Wellington fully his match—while, on the other hand, the fact that a quarter of a million men were permanently locked up in Spain enormously increased his difficulties when he found himself fighting for life after the Moscow disaster. We may now turn to the continuous history of the Peninsula War.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, whom we may for the future refer to by the familiar title of Wellington, since he was made Viscount Wellington after the battle of Talavera in July of this year, 1809, returned to take the supreme command in Portugal in April. He was satisfied that Portugal with her mountainous borders could be defended against invaders, while his own communications with England were assured by sea. Portugal was to be made the base for invading Spain and co-operating with the insurgent armies. The northern line for invasion was commanded on the Spanish frontier by the fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo, the southern by that



of Badajoz. The first business was to drive Soult with his army out of Northern Portugal, and this was effected in May. The next was to co-operate with the Spaniards by invading Spain and marching upon Madrid.

The Spanish forces were badly directed and badly handled. The British general met the French under the command of the Marshals Jourdan and Victor at Talavera, and routed them after a hot engagement. The victory won Wellington his peerage; defeat might have wrought the annihilation of the British army, as Soult had already reorganised the northern force and was threatening the communications with Portugal. But even this



The Spanish Peninsula showing the area and centres of the War of 1808-1813.

victory proved only the immense danger of a further advance, and the inefficiency of the Spanish troops. Wellington fell back into Portugal, where he spent his time for the next year in organising his army and the great system of defence against which the French legions were to be rolled in vain. For Wagram set Napoleon free to flood Spain with additional troops, and offensive operations were out of the question for Wellington.

In the eyes of the public, Talavera was the one redeeming feature among the events of the year, and that appeared small enough. A great battle and a glorious victory are not expected to be the prelude to a retreat, and there were not wanting those who clamoured against the whole idea of the Peninsula campaign. Men were inclined to believe that on



land Napoleon was invincible, and hitherto the British record had not suggested that British armies and British generals were capable of defying him. It was to the credit of the strongest members of the Government, and of some of the Whigs who were by no means friendly to the Government, that they held doggedly to the war and to the support of Wellington, the Whigs being actuated mainly by the principle that we were fighting in the Peninsula for the liberty of a nation rightly struggling to be free.

Public uneasiness too was intensified by the mismanagement in other fields. The Government having taken upon itself the heroic burden of Portugal also took upon itself to attack France in Holland. The idea in itself was perhaps not unsound. The Walcheren expedition, if despatched in time, ought to have created a diversion which would have seriously complicated the Wagram campaign for Napoleon. But it was hopelessly mismanaged. It ought to have been a sudden stroke at Antwerp, but its start was delayed, so that the French had time to prepare. The army was placed under the incompetent Earl of Chatham, the elder brother of William Pitt. The naval force was under Sir Richard Strachan. More time was wasted on the quite unnecessary capture of Flushing; the commanders failed to co-operate, and their blundering is commemorated in the popular rhyme—

“ Lord Chatham with his sword drawn  
Was waiting for Sir Richard Strachan.  
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,  
Was waiting for the Earl of Chatham.”

Having captured Flushing the force found that Antwerp had been made impregnable. It settled down in the Isle of Walcheren without medical supplies, and there fell a prey to malaria. The men died like flies, and before the end of the year the shattered remnant of a much vaunted expedition had to be brought home again.

At the end of this year the Duke of Portland, the titular head of the ministry, resigned, and shortly afterwards died. His resignation had been preceded by those of George Canning and Castlereagh, who had quarrelled so bitterly over a misunderstanding that they fought a duel, after which it was practically impossible for either of them to remain in office. Canning's place in the new ministry headed by Perceval was taken by the Marquess Wellesley, and young Lord Palmerston joined the government as Secretary at War, though without a seat in the Cabinet—an office which he retained for the next eighteen years. The changes involved no alteration of policy; even Wellesley's presence in the Cabinet was hardly a stronger guarantee of support for his brother at the seat of war than Canning's had been. At the end of 1810 the king's brain-malady returned, and consequently a Regency Bill appointing the Prince of Wales regent with unlimited powers was passed in the following year. The situation was practically unaffected thereby, for the heir-apparent was no longer, as in



1788, intimately associated with the leaders of the Whig party, which was now in a hopeless minority.

In 1810 Napoleon, annoyed by the continuation of the Peninsula War, resolved to sweep away the obstructing British, and sent Masséna with a Grand Army to carry out the task. Soult mastered the whole of the southern province of Spain, Andalusia, with the exception of Cadiz, which defied him. Suchet mastered Aragon, and Wellington, with some thirty thousand British troops, was intended to be the prey of perhaps the ablest of the French marshals with seventy thousand men. Inadequately supported with men and money from home in consequence of the Walcheren fiasco, the British general could only stand on the defensive, with the additional danger before him that Soult from the South might co-operate with Masséna. From this the jealousies of the French marshals delivered him. Masséna's advance at first was unchecked. He secured Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, a strong fortress within the Portuguese frontier. He intended to sweep the British into the sea, but Wellington had perfected his defensive preparations. At the end of September he met and repulsed at Busaco the attack of Masséna, who was disappointed by finding that the Portuguese troops with his adversary were by no means to be despised. But Busaco was merely a check. Wellington fell back into the peninsula whereon Lisbon stands.

Then Masséna suddenly found himself confronted by the lines of Torres Vedras, and realised that Wellington's engineers had made them completely impregnable. Also he found that Wellington had very carefully denuded the whole surrounding country of supplies which, with the rural population, had been collected within his lines. For nearly five months, from the middle of November, Masséna lay powerless to strike, with an army gradually famishing and perpetually harassed by the Portuguese guerillas. In March he began his retreat, while Soult confined himself to capturing Badajoz on the south. Wellington followed and laid siege to Almeida. Masséna, with his weakened army, attempted a relief, but was beaten after two days of critical fighting at Fuentes d'Oñoro, and Almeida was taken, though the garrison broke its way out.

Within a fortnight Beresford had fought and won the sanguinary battle of Albuera in the south. He was attempting to recover Badajoz, when Soult attacked him with twenty-three thousand men. Of Beresford's force only some ten thousand were British troops, and upon them fell nearly the whole of the fighting. More than a third of their number fell, but Soult was driven off with a loss of six thousand. Wellington, having cleared the North, hastened to join Beresford; but Marmont, who had taken Masséna's place, combined forces with Soult, and the siege of Badajoz had to be abandoned. Wellington made a dash upon Ciudad Rodrigo, but Marmont foiled the movement and he had to fall back again into Portugal. Apparently he had achieved little enough; it was still only within Portugal that he was master. Nevertheless his operations had



served perpetually to relieve the pressure upon the Spanish guerillas, who, throughout the war, showed a resourcefulness and a fighting capacity in marked contrast to that of the official Spanish troops; while their activities at the same time helped the jealousies of the French marshals to prevent the overwhelming concentrations of French troops which might have pinned Wellington to Torres Vedras.

So, at the end of 1811, Wellington had not been driven into the sea, though it was still possible to argue with honest conviction that the war in the Peninsula was producing no results commensurate with the heavy expenditure of blood and treasure. But its justification was near at hand. Napoleon was planning his Russian expedition, and, instead of reinforcing the army in the Peninsula, he was reducing its numbers in the winter and spring in order to strengthen his Grand Army for Moscow. He may have been misled too by the successful operations of Suchet in the east of Spain.

Thus at last the time was ripe for Wellington to begin a series of more



Badajoz and its Citadel from the north bank of the River Guadiana.

[From a view taken in 1813.]

actively offensive operations. Suddenly in January he sprang upon Ciudad Rodrigo; Marmont began a movement for its rescue, but not in time to prevent Wellington from carrying it by assault. Unsuspicious of Wellington's designs, Marmont again retired to winter quarters. Again the British general struck and struck hard, this time to the southward, falling upon Badajoz, which was carried by escalade after furious fighting, in which the most desperate courage and determination were displayed both by defenders and assailants; although both here and at Ciudad Rodrigo the splendid valour of the British soldiery was marred by the brutal excesses in which the troops, which got utterly out of hand, indulged after the victory. Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz were the gates of Spain.

Badajoz fell in April. Wellington would probably have been glad to tempt Soult into an immediate engagement while his own men were in the full tide of confidence gained by their last triumph. But Soult was not to be tempted, and Wellington could not leave Badajoz till the fortifications had been reinstated. By that time it was becoming imperative that he should deal with Marmont in the North, for the Spaniards had failed to



carry out the advice given them by the British commander and the country was still open. Northward, therefore, he turned, despatching General Hill to secure the passage of the Tagus at Almaraz—the only line by which it was possible to effect a junction with the Northern army. Hill's work was admirably done. The position was strongly held by the French, but the movement for its capture was skilfully concealed; it was rushed by a brilliant attack, the pontoon bridge was demolished, the magazine and stores were destroyed, and the communications between Soult and Marmont were completely severed.

In June the Salamanca campaign opened. The combatants were not unequally matched in point either of numbers or of the military genius of the commanders. Neither was willing to fight an indecisive battle. It was not till the middle of July that the movements of the two armies, each endeavouring to secure a decisively superior position in which it could compel the other to fight on its own terms, brought on the crisis and the actual battle of Salamanca, which was fought on July 22nd. The decisive moment came when Marmont attempted to carry out an enveloping movement on Wellington's flank, which, if it had been accomplished successfully, would have given him a decisive victory. But there was a moment when the extending of Marmont's lines opened a gap, and the moment was seized by his adversary. Wellington broke the line, cut off the centre and the left from the right wing, and rolled them up. Fifteen thousand of the French army were killed, wounded, or prisoners. Three weeks later Wellington was in Madrid, hailed with frantic joy as their saviour by the enthusiastic populace. But even Salamanca did not mean that Spain was won; a concentration of the French armies would still bring a greatly superior force against the British. Before the end of the year Wellington was once more behind the Portuguese frontier. The decisive blow was still deferred.

Meanwhile, the ministry at home had again been modified. Early in the year Wellesley, dissatisfied with the treatment meted out both to himself and to his brother, resigned, and Castlereagh took his place as Foreign Secretary. Then in May the Prime Minister Perceval was assassinated by a lunatic, and his place at the head of the ministry was taken by Lord Liverpool, a man somewhat of the Pelham type, not a distinguished statesman but endowed with an abnormal capacity for reconciling hostile elements. Wellesley would not return to the ministry, and there was not room in one Cabinet for George Canning as well as Castlereagh. Castlereagh, however, was no less determined than Wellesley himself to carry the struggle with Napoleon in general, and in the Peninsula in particular, to a decisive conclusion.

While Wellington and Marmont were manœuvring for the mastery before Salamanca, Napoleon was launching his expedition against Russia. Both Prussia and Austria found discretion the better part of valour and stood nominally as his allies, his troops being given free passage through



the Prussian territories. At the end of June the Grand Army entered Russian Poland, where it was generally welcomed by the Poles. But the Russians played the Fabian game, retreating before the half million men whom Napoleon was leading. Not till September did they stay to give battle, when they faced the Emperor at Borodino. The slaughter on both sides was terrific, but, though the Russians left the French masters of the field, they were not routed but continued their retreat. On the 14th, a week after Borodino, Napoleon reached Moscow. He found the city deserted and empty; the next day it was in flames. For five weeks the Emperor remained at Moscow—though half the town was a charred ruin—vainly hoping that the Tsar would come to terms. Then he began his retreat by a different route, for on the line of his advance his army must have perished of sheer starvation. The Russians gave him one fierce battle, in which the victory lay with the French, but by this time the Grand Army was already shattered. It was not worth while for the Russians to accept another general engagement; they were content to cut off supplies and perpetually harass the retreat of the starving army. Then the severities of a Russian winter came to their aid. At the crossing of the Beresina the French escaped annihilation and no more. Napoleon deserted his force, leaving Murat to conduct the retreat; it was a mere remnant of the Grand Army that re-entered Prussia in December. The effect of the disaster was tremendous. Within three months the King of Prussia, swept away by the uprising of the national spirit, formally allied himself with Russia, declared war against France, and issued an appeal to all Germany to join in a war of liberation. Austria for the time held aloof. But meanwhile the amazing energy of Napoleon had produced a new army with which he twice defeated the allies before the end of May. Then an armistice proved fatal, for it enabled the allies to improve their organisation and to bring Austria into the coalition. Even then Napoleon won a great battle at Dresden in August, but in the middle of October the gathered nations overwhelmed him at Leipzig. Napoleon was no longer fighting to dominate Europe. The question now was whether Europe would crush Napoleon. And Europe was only just beginning to believe that in fighting against Napoleon it was not fighting against Fate.

But Britain's particular concern was with the Peninsula. The Moscow disaster compelled Napoleon to withdraw more troops from Spain, and Wellington prepared for a decisive campaign. In May he crossed the Portuguese frontier, and on June 21st he met Marshal Jourdan and King Joseph at Vittoria. The French army was shattered, and fled in rout to the Pyrenees, leaving behind the whole of its artillery and stores, a million of money, and the accumulated spoils of many years. Except in the extreme north, the Peninsula was practically clear of the enemy by the end of June. The British army in Spain was now to become the invader of France. Nevertheless, it was only after a long series of stubborn



engagements with Soult that Wellington made good a footing on French soil. The last fierce battle, itself an indecisive one, was fought at Toulouse on April 10, 1814. And that battle itself was a sheer waste of life; for the allies had taken heart of grace, poured into France, and taken possession of Paris; and on April 6th Napoleon had abdicated. Louis XVIII. was proclaimed King of France, and Europe permitted Napoleon to retire to the principality of the island of Elba in the Mediterranean.

## IV

## INDIA AND AMERICA

In 1812 Britain had become involved on her own account in a separate war with the United States, and throughout the whole period of the contest with Napoleon she had been establishing and extending her dominion in India. To these two fields we shall now turn our attention before proceeding with the events in Europe during the fifteen months which elapsed between Napoleon's abdication and his final overthrow.

At the close of the century Lord Mornington, who had just been created Marquess Wellesley, was Governor-General of India, had completed the overthrow of Tippu Sultan, and had annexed the greater portion of his territories to the British dominion. Wellesley was the first British Governor-General who deliberately and of set purpose sought to add to the realms under direct British administration. Clive, after the conquest of Bengal, which had not been designed, desired no further expansion; Warren Hastings had had enough to do in organising and maintaining what was already secured, and the acquisitions of territory under Cornwallis had been forced upon the Governor-General. His successor, Shore, had pursued a policy of non-intervention to a point which had aroused in native potentates new hopes of overthrowing the British dominion. Wellesley was the first to recognise that an actual paramount power was a necessity in India, where each native potentate desired supremacy for himself. It was clear to Wellesley that if the British were to remain in India at all it must be in the character of paramount power. The overthrow of Tippu was a palpable necessity which would have been as patent to Cornwallis as to Wellesley himself; it could not properly be called an act of aggression. But to Wellesley it was not an inconvenient but a welcome necessity.

His great instrument in establishing British ascendancy was the system of subsidiary alliances, the system under which the country powers were guaranteed British protection against aggressors by virtually surrendering the control of their military force to the British. Their main standing army at least became under these conditions a British contingent; an army, that is, of sepoys disciplined and commanded by British officers. The payment of the force could not be left to the potentates; it must be



maintained by the British, and therefore the potentate must guarantee the cost to the British. The one secure guarantee was the cession of territories, which provided a sufficient revenue for the purpose. Thus a double end was served. The potentate, while he was secured against aggression, could by no means defy the advice of the power which controlled his soldiery; he had in effect become a dependant, and at the same time the British had become the effective possessors and administrators of new territories. On these lines subsidiary alliances were made, and districts were ceded by the Nizam and the Nawab of Oudh. The persistent misrule and the extensive debts of the Nawab of the Carnatic provided a sufficient ground for pensioning off the dynasty, annexing the province, and placing it under direct British administration. Dynastic questions at Tanjur and Surat were settled when the British took over the control of administration as a condition of recognising the technical succession of the respective claimants.

Rivalries and hostilities between the heads of the different branches of the Maratha confederacy gave Wellesley another opportunity. Each of them had stoutly refused the British proffer of a subsidiary alliance until the Peishwa at Puna accepted a treaty as a lesser evil than subjection to Holkar. The result was that Sindhia and the Bhonsla tried to bring about a combined Maratha resistance, and so brought on the Maratha war, from which at first the jealous Holkar stood aloof. Sindhia, the most northerly of the Maratha chiefs, from his position at Gwalior generally held control of the Mogul. He had organised his forces upon the European model under French officers. When war was declared in August 1803 this force was in the north, but Sindhia himself with a second army was on the borders of the Deccan to co-operate with the Bhonsla. It was in this southern war that the Governor-General's brother, Arthur Wellesley, won the laurels to which chiefly he owed his subsequent appointment to the command in the Peninsula. His small force completely routed Sindhia and the Bhonsla, first at Assaye and then at Argaon. Meanwhile, in the north Lake had defeated Sindhia's French general at Delhi, captured the person of the Mogul, and then crushed the Marathas at Laswari. By the end of the year both Sindhia and the Bhonsla had made peace, surrendering their claims to *chauth* from other princes, and ceding considerable districts, some of which were handed over to the Nizam. Incidentally Sindhia agreed to dismiss his French officers, and both agreed to accept British arbitration in disputes with native powers. The treaty completed the line of British territory along the whole seaboard from Calcutta to Madras, but it also in effect transferred the guardianship of the Mogul from Sindhia to the British, so simplifying their recognition as the sovereign power.

It was unfortunate that Holkar now chose to rise on his own account, and that Colonel Monson, who was sent to deal with him, was obliged to beat a hasty and disorderly retreat, which brought much discredit on the British arms. Holkar ventured to attack Delhi, but was beaten off and



driven out of the northern territory by General Fraser. It was at this time that Wellesley was recalled, owing to the alarm which his expansive policy had aroused among the directors. Cornwallis returned once more to the scene of his former labours, but only to die ; and the Governor-Generalship devolved upon Sir George Barlow. The appointment was not a happy one, for Holkar was granted peace upon terms which excited general derision and contempt for the British.

Barlow, however, was superseded in 1807 by Lord Minto, who very soon realised that the policy of non-intervention was impracticable, and also that when the British did intervene they must do so in a decisive fashion. Minto's Governor-Generalship was marked by the establishment of friendly relations between the British Government and the astute statesman and warrior, Ranjit Singh, who was now consolidating into a very powerful kingdom the confederacy of the Sikhs in the Punjab. Not very happily also began the opening of diplomatic relations with Persia and with Afghanistan, in both cases owing to the first symptoms of the nervousness which Russia was to inspire throughout the century. It was just after the Tsar had made the Treaty of Tilsit with Napoleon, and the fear of Russian expansion towards the Indian border was never from that time forward absent from the mind of the British government in India. For the time, however, the alarm was allayed by the rapidity with which the sudden friendship between the Tsar and the Emperor cooled down and changed into hostility. Otherwise the most notable ventures of Minto's rule were the capture of Java from the Dutch and of Mauritius from the French. This latter was a stroke of importance, since the French station at Mauritius lay on the flank of the communications with the Cape ; and a squadron from the Mauritius was generally a possible danger whenever native powers were embroiled with the British.

But Minto also was too aggressive for the authorities at home, and he in his turn was superseded by Lord Moira, who was shortly afterwards created Marquess of Hastings. The new Governor-General, like Minto and Wellesley, was no sooner in India than he found himself obliged to throw over the policy of non-intervention, although he had arrived fully determined to carry it out. By the beginning of 1814 he found himself forced into a war with a new enemy, the Ghurkas of Nepal—a very valiant race of mountaineers, who, in spite of their small numbers, began to prey upon the people in the plains below the Himalayas. The first expedition sent against them was so disastrous that half of India was again on the alert for the breakdown of the British ascendancy, but the stubborn hill-men were presently mastered in spite of a most courageous defence by the skill and persistence of Ochterlony. The treaty which ended the war in 1815 as a matter of course transferred a great belt of territory from Nepal to the British ; but it also had the unusual effect of establishing a particularly loyal and enduring friendship between the Nepal government and the Ghurka race on the one side and the British on the other, a friendship



of inestimable value in the darkest hours of the history of the British dominion in India. The rest of the rule of Lord Hastings belongs to our next chapter.

The war with the United States arose out of Britain's use of her maritime supremacy and the injury to American trade caused by the Continental System, the British Orders in Council, and the virtual suppression of neutral traffic which the Americans attributed to the high-handed tyranny of the nation from which they had separated themselves. The utility of the Orders in Council was always somewhat doubtful, even from the purely British point of view; they fell into abeyance after the death of their most determined advocate Perceval, and in 1812 they were withdrawn. But the mischief was done; the United States had already declared war. As a matter of fact there had never been any reconciliation between the two nations, which still felt towards each other the bitterness engendered by a fratricidal struggle; and in such cases a cool enquiry into grievances is not to be looked for.

When the war began, just as Wellington and Marmont were facing each other and Napoleon was starting for Moscow, the British Government gave very insufficient attention to the minor contest with the United States, with the somewhat astonishing result that for some time the Americans were uniformly successful at sea. On the other hand, their reversion to the old attempt to capture Canada brought to them complete disaster, since the United Empire Loyalists fought against them with all the animus inspired by the events which had driven them across the St. Lawrence from their homes in the south. Canadians remember with a just pride the courage and skill with which their ancestors repelled the invader. In the course of time British naval supremacy re-asserted itself; but the only memorably creditable performance of British sailors was the famous duel between the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake*, when the *Chesapeake* was forced to surrender after fifteen minutes of fighting, although the two ships were equally matched. A British expedition under General Ross won a battle at Bladensburg and burnt Washington; and another British expedition, mainly of veteran troops from the Peninsula, was smashed up at New Orleans in the attempt to storm impregnable entrenchments. Like the battle of Toulouse, this last engagement was a sheer waste, because a treaty of peace between the belligerents had been signed at Ghent a fortnight earlier, on Christmas Eve, 1814.

The war was a particularly evil one, first, because it could have been easily averted by a little mutual common-sense and good temper; secondly, because it served no good purpose for either side; thirdly, because it failed to bring out on either side those virtues which are supposed to decay unless stimulated by hard fighting; and, fourthly, because it left an inheritance of extraordinary bitterness between the two great nations of British race, a tradition of hostility and distrust which was scarcely allayed even when the nineteenth century was drawing to its close. In one single



respect, however, the British Empire may be held to have benefited, because that war made impossible any such *rapprochement* between the Canadians and their southern neighbours as might have tended to sever Canada from the British Empire.

## V

## WATERLOO

After the abdication of Napoleon the Powers proceeded to settle the affairs of Europe. The Bourbon monarchy was restored in France, though modified by constitutional limitations. The Tsar, and Castlereagh for the British, insisted upon generous treatment for France on the principle that it was not monarchical France but the Republic and Napoleon that had been responsible for the twenty years of war. Both also insisted on the limitation of the powers of the restored monarchy; Castlereagh because of the pressure of British public opinion, the Tsar because he was at this time an ardent believer in theoretical doctrines of liberty. It was the honest wish of the British nation and of the British Government to set aside selfish considerations, and to strive for a general settlement whose permanence would be guaranteed by its fairness and justice. For herself Britain claimed little, and was willing to surrender much that she might legitimately have claimed; it is noteworthy that her most persistent demand was for a humanitarian agreement for the suppression of the slave trade. But European affairs could not be settled merely upon broad principles of justice when pledges had to be taken into consideration which had nothing to do with broad principles but only with particular interests. After a preliminary settlement a Congress of the Powers was appointed to meet at Vienna in the winter, to arrange outstanding questions which were far too complicated and involved too many antagonistic interests to be settled in haste.

We need not here follow the intricacies of diplomacy at the Vienna Congress during the winter of 1814-15. Suspicions and jealousies made it no easy matter to re-arrange the distribution of European territories in a manner satisfactory to the great Powers, to say nothing of the minor states; and at one time, in January 1815, matters had gone so far that France, Austria, and Britain made a secret treaty for united action in case the obstinacy of Russia and Prussia should rekindle a European conflagration. Still compromises were being achieved, and a general agreement seemed to be approaching, when all bickerings and quarrels were silenced by the startling news that Napoleon had slipped away from Elba, landed at Cannes on March 1st, and was appealing once more to the French nation to rally to his standard.

The Bourbon restoration was not popular in France, since the attitude of the royalists on their return from exile showed that they had learnt



nothing from the Revolution. Napoleon proclaimed that he was coming to restore not a despotism but a constitutional system; not to embroil Europe but to preserve the principles of the Revolution. The French troops in the south which were marched out against him answered his appeal and hailed him emperor. Most of the marshals had accepted the Bourbon restoration; those who were true to the monarchy had to take



The Duke of Wellington

[After the painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.]

flight precipitately. Napoleon's progress towards Paris became a triumphal march; Ney, who advanced against him with loud and probably sincere protestations of loyalty to the Bourbons, fell under the spell and joined his old master. On March 13th the Powers at Vienna proclaimed Napoleon the public enemy of Europe; on the 19th King Louis fled from Paris to Ghent; on the 20th Napoleon himself was in Paris. On the 25th the four great Powers bound themselves to place a hundred and fifty

thousand men apiece in the field. They were unanimous in the conviction that to make terms with Napoleon would be futile; that his promises were insincere, and that in any case Napoleon, once more at the head of the French Empire, could not, even if he would, resist the temptation to resume aggression.

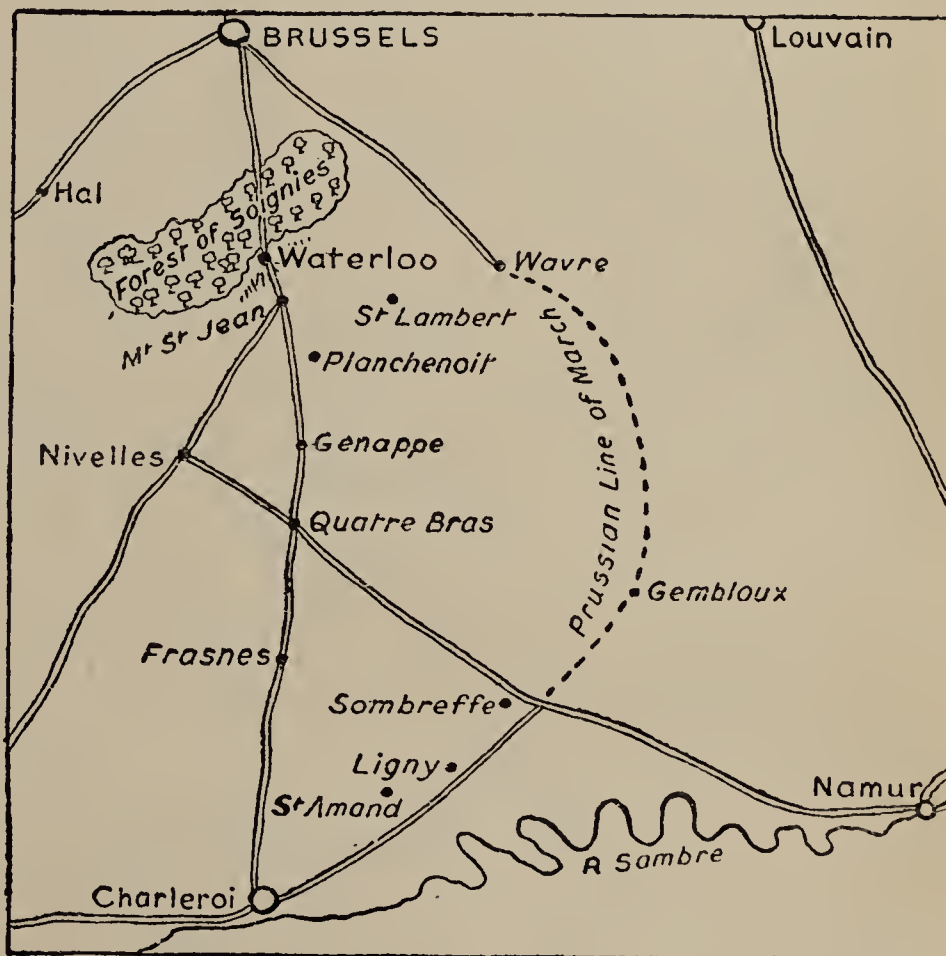
During the following weeks the Powers were engaged in a somewhat feverish endeavour to bring their disbanded armies into the field. Austria and Russia, remote and slow-moving, could not hope to hurry their forces to the front; Napoleon had the enormous advantage enjoyed by a dictator who holds all the strings in his own hands. At the beginning of June Wellington, created a duke in 1814, was in command of the allied forces in the Netherlands, numbering ninety thousand men; a heterogeneous



force, of which some thirty thousand were British—mostly raw recruits, since the Peninsula veterans were not yet back from America. Some twenty thousand Brunswickers and Hanoverians and the troops of the king's German legion, which had distinguished itself in the Peninsula, were also thoroughly to be relied upon; the rest, chiefly Belgians and Dutch, did not inspire confidence.

The Prussian forces under Blücher, numbering a hundred and twenty thousand, were extended a little to the eastward between Liège and Charleroi. Meanwhile, behind the French border Napoleon's energy was concentrating a force of a hundred and twenty-five thousand men, a large proportion of them veterans, at Valenciennes. Incidentally a diversion in Napoleon's favour by Joachim Murat, King of Naples, collapsed completely; Murat had to fly to France, and the Bourbon Ferdinand was once more proclaimed king of the Two Sicilies.

Napoleon's strength lay in the extraordinary rapidity with which his organisation worked. The longer the time allowed to the allies, the greater would be the forces massed against him; and his great aim was to be able to strike at them in detail and

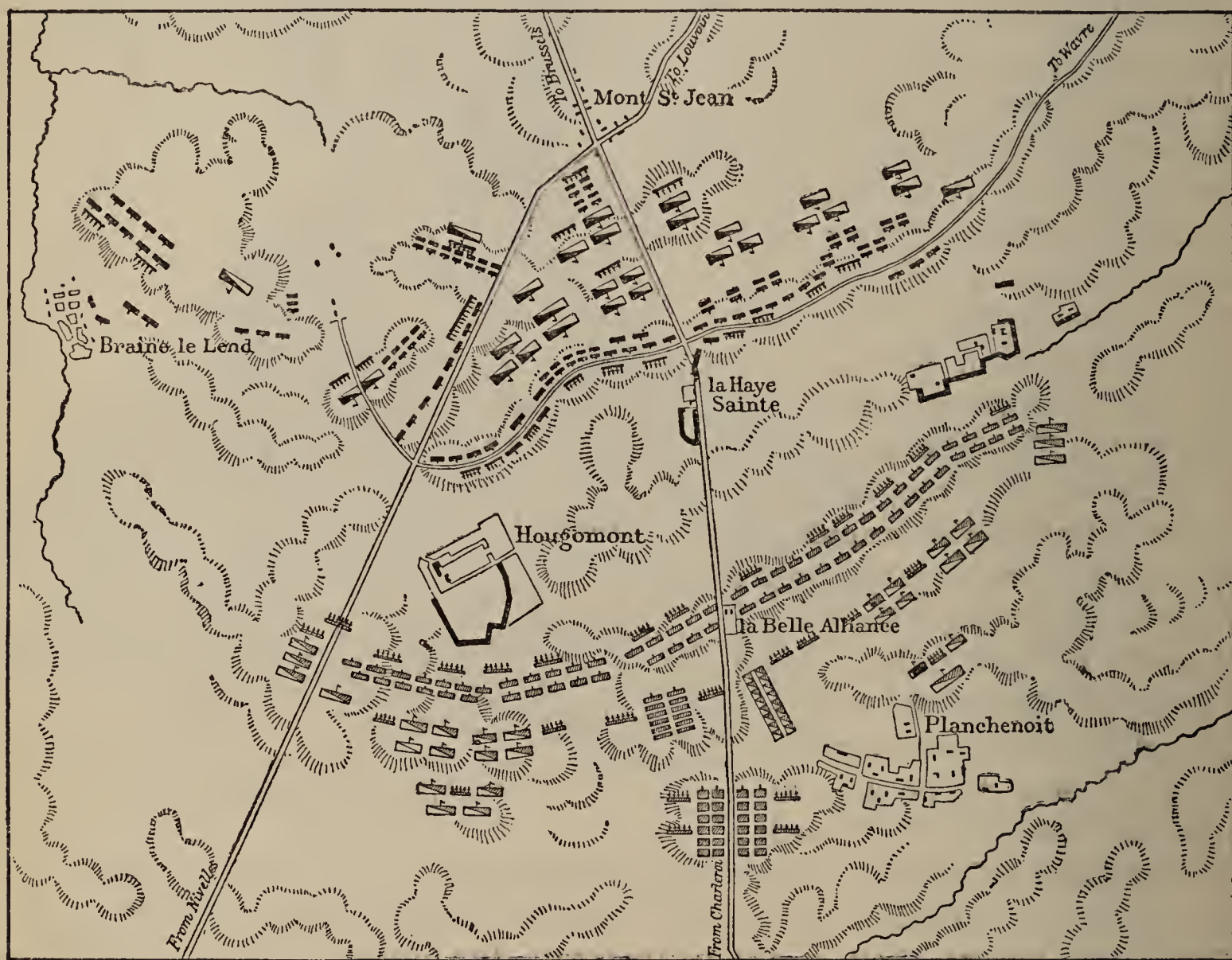


The Waterloo Campaign.

destroy them separately instead of allowing them to be massed together at all. The first object, therefore, was to strike between Blücher and Wellington before they could concentrate for united action. Napoleon delivered his first blow before his enemies' preparations were completed. On June 12th he left Paris to join the army. On June 15th he was over the frontier and swept the Prussian advanced corps out of Charleroi, driving it back on the main body. This was the famous night of the Duchess of Richmond's ball at Brussels. The concentration had not yet begun; it appears still to have been Wellington's conviction that Napoleon's intention was to turn his left and cut him off from the sea. Blücher hurried up his forces to Ligny; Wellington promised him support if he were not himself attacked. Napoleon, however, despatched Ney to seize the cross-roads at Quatre Bras, while he himself flung his main attack upon Blücher at Ligny. Ney would thus be able to hold a British advance in check and to turn Blücher's left flank.



The plan miscarried, but only in part. Some of the allies under the Duke of Saxe-Weimar occupied Quatre Bras before Ney's arrival. Ney did not attack at once, British regiments were hurried to the front one after another, Ney's attacks were beaten off, and before the end of the day the British were in superior force. A corps under D'Erlon wavered all day between Ligny and Quatre Bras, and failed to render any help in either engagement. The result was that although the Prussians suffered very heavy losses and were driven from the field, they were not routed but made good an orderly retreat under cover of night; and Blücher, instead of



Waterloo: the opposing armies.

falling back upon his own base at Namur as the French expected, wheeled north to Wavre in order if possible to effect a junction with Wellington.

Now, if Ney and D'Erlon had carried out their task without a hitch, Blücher, at Ligny, would have been not only defeated but routed; the Prussian army would have ceased to count. As it was, Napoleon was perfectly satisfied that Blücher had fallen back in accordance with all orthodox rules of war upon Namur. He anticipated no difficulty in preventing his reappearance on the field, and to this end he despatched a containing force under Grouchy on the 17th, while he prepared with his main army to annihilate Wellington.

The Duke, who was informed of Blücher's movements, drew in the



forces from Quatre Bras and established himself on the ridge of Mont St. Jean covering the way to Brussels. Blücher had promised to give his support—if he could; and it was Wellington's business—if he could—to hold on to the position he had chosen until Blücher arrived. The event of the battle depended upon the Prussian's ability to carry out his provisional promise; that is, Wellington was bound to fight with a view to winning a decisive victory if Blücher arrived, although there was an exceedingly strong presumption that if Blücher did not arrive at all he would find the task of holding his ground extremely difficult, especially in view of the character of his troops. As a matter of fact, both Wellington and Blücher succeeded in carrying out the rôles appropriated to them respectively. If Blücher had failed, Wellington would probably have been forced to retreat. If Wellington had failed, a worse disaster than Ligny would probably have awaited Blücher. Neither of them failed, and the result was that the French army was shattered to pieces. It was Wellington's battle because, unbeaten, he bore the burden and heat of the day. It was the Prussians' battle, because they weakened the attack upon Wellington, and, having first ensured the defeat, turned it into an overwhelming rout.

Two facts combined to bring about Napoleon's overthrow by making possible the concerted action of British and Prussians. The cause of both was in part at least Napoleon's misleading information as to the line of Blücher's retreat. The first regiments falling back from Ligny had made for Namur. Grouchy followed on a wrong trail, and therefore on the 18th he failed to contain the Prussian army. Napoleon was satisfied that the Prussians could not arrive, and therefore waited till the 18th before attacking Wellington. It is conceivable that if Napoleon had opened his attack even three or four hours sooner than he did the Prussians would not have arrived in time to prevent him from carrying Wellington's position. But it is by no means clear that he would in any case have carried it. He relied upon tactics which had proved successful against every army in Europe except a British army; but the peculiar British method had been employed with success against one after another of his best marshals. Broadly speaking, Napoleon's method was to hurl heavy masses of troops in column against the weak point in the extended line of the enemy, and so to break it and roll it up. But Soult knew by experience that the thin extended British line would stand up against heavy masses hurled against it without flinching. The column against the line had broken the troops of every other nation, but it could not be employed with confidence against the troops of Britain. Napoleon, it must be observed, had never yet met the British in battle himself; and had not learnt by personal experience the lessons which had been brought home to some of his marshals.

In the early morning, then, of Sunday June 18 Wellington knew that Blücher would move with the object of attacking Napoleon's right flank; Blücher knew that Wellington was going to give battle at Waterloo.



Napoleon believed that there could be no dangerous movement on the part of the Prussians. Of Wellington's sixty-seven thousand men scarcely one-third were British troops, another third could be thoroughly depended upon, but the balance could not. Napoleon had seventy-four thousand men, and was very much better provided with artillery and cavalry. The left of the allied army was difficult to attack. On the centre and right the slope was not sufficiently steep to be a serious obstacle. The centre, however, was covered by the farm of La Haye Sainte, the right by the Château of Hougoumont. A dip behind the crest of the ridge to a great extent concealed the disposition of Wellington's troops. The leading feature of Napoleon's plan was to clear the way by a storm of artillery fire for hurling cavalry charges on the centre and piercing it; but the capture of La



The Château of Hougoumont after the battle.

[From a drawing by S. Wharton made in 1815.]

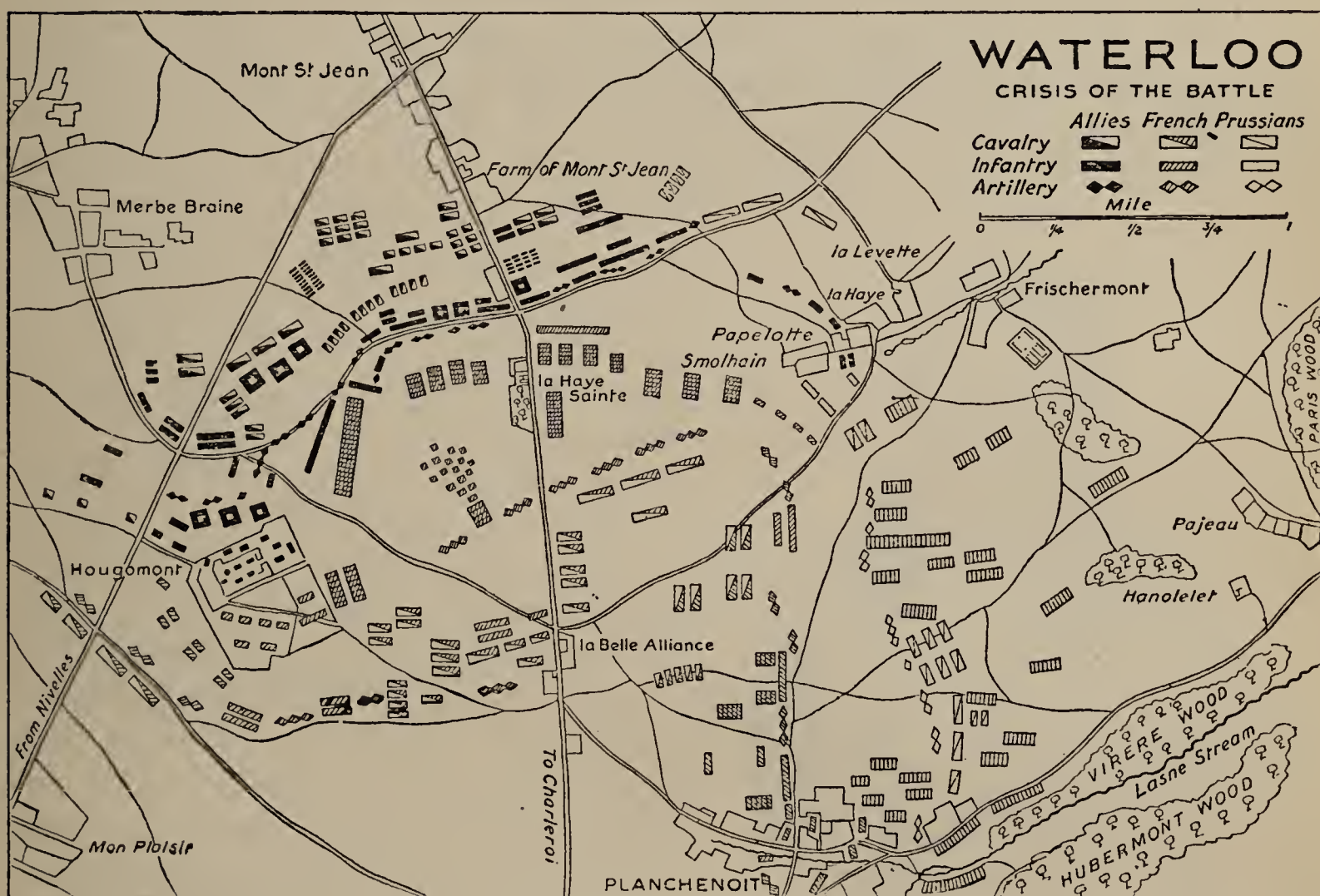
Haye Sainte, occupied by a portion of the king's German legion, was of material importance to the execution of this design.

The two arms, then, upon which Napoleon chiefly relied were the artillery and the cavalry. He delayed opening the attack until noon in order that the surface of the ground might recover, as its soaked condition interfered with cavalry operations. The firing began, to cover an attack upon Hougoumont, with the object not so much of capturing the château itself as of securing a position in the surrounding wood which would prevent the movement of troops on Wellington's right. Jerome Bonaparte, however, wasted much blood and energy in a fruitless attempt to storm the château, which was held with invincible resolution by a detachment of Guards. This was the prelude to the main attack on the centre, which was opened about 1.30, just when it had been ascertained that a Prussian corps was approaching from Wavre. D'Erlon's corps was launched against La Haye Sainte, where the Germans held on with the same stubborn valour which



was displayed at Hougoumont. But the French columns rolled up the slope, and the Dutch regiments which held the ridge at that point broke and fled. As the French topped the ridge, it seemed for a moment that the day was won ; but their columns were shattered and swept back down the slope by a furious charge of Ponsonby's Union Brigade—Royal Dragoons, Inniskillings, and Scots Greys. The brigade crashed up the slope on the other side of the valley, disabled a number of the French guns, and was then almost cut to pieces itself by a fresh force of French Lancers and Dragoons. But the attack had been repulsed, and the Germans still held La Haye Sainte.

The time, however, had now come for Napoleon to launch the cavalry



Waterloo : the crisis.

charges upon the British centre ; but charge after charge was rolled back. The gunners on the front of the ridge worked their guns to the last moment possible, and then raced for shelter to the hollow squares into which the infantry were formed behind the ridge. Against the squares the cavalry broke in vain. The British and German horse charged upon the broken columns, and swept them back and down the hill again. The squares were repeatedly enveloped by cavalry, but were never pierced ; and the French charges were not supported by infantry, in part at least because these were now being drawn off on Napoleon's right to hold back the approaching Prussians. It was not till seven o'clock that Napoleon struck his last blow, sending the masses of his Old Guard in the wake of the cavalry charges.



But the invincible veterans had met their match. The British centre was strengthened by regiments called in from the wings whose movements were concealed from the enemy. On their right the British line was wheeled forward so as to pour in a heavy flank fire upon the mass of the advancing columns. Nevertheless they surged over the ridge; then the word was given to the Guards who were lying under cover to stand up and fire. Even the Old Guard staggered before the withering volley, reeled and rolled down the slope again as the order was given for the whole British line to advance. The Prussians had swept the stubborn defenders out of Planchenoit on the French right, and were thundering in upon Napoleon's flank. The last desperate effort had failed, the defeat became a rout, and the rout a headlong *sauve qui peut*. The exhausted British halted, but far into the night the furious Prussian horse took their revenge for Jena. Three weeks later Napoleon surrendered himself to the captain of H.M.S. *Bellerophon*.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### FROM WATERLOO TO THE REFORM BILL

#### I

#### CASTLEREAGH

THE custodianship of the fallen Emperor was deputed by the European Powers to Britain. The dread he inspired could be allayed only by caging him in the remote island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic, whence escape was impossible. So closed the Titanic tragedy of Napoleon's career. The Emperor being disposed of, the Powers turned to the settlement of Europe. Britain, the one Power which from beginning to end had fought against French aggression, had never been forced to make terms, had never withdrawn from a coalition, and had finally borne the whole stress of the great fight by which Napoleon was ultimately overthrown, claimed no very great share of the spoils. Malta and the Ionian Islands in the Mediterranean, the Mauritius and Ceylon in the Indian Ocean, some islands in the West Indies, and the Dutch colony at the Cape, she was fully entitled to claim by right of conquest; and these she took, although for Cape Colony she paid solid compensation in cash to William of Orange, on whom was bestowed the crown of a new kingdom of Holland, which included Belgium. She did not succeed in her efforts to persuade the Powers to unite in suppressing the slave trade, though a general declaration condemning it was issued. What she had won was sufficient to secure her supremacy in the Mediterranean and the complete command of the ocean route to India, which could always have been threatened on the flank by a Power possessing the Cape or Mauritius. It may safely be claimed that no other Power entitled to so much would have been content with so little; but it was enough, for it



Lord Castlereagh.

[After the portrait by Lawrence.]



assured the maritime supremacy which made her further expansion certain. Moreover, apart from the treaty, the war itself had not only confirmed her commercial supremacy but had bestowed upon her an immense lead in the new industrialism of which she was the creator. Great as the strain had been, it had borne less heavily upon her than upon any other nation in Europe. In these islands alone the tramp of hostile legions had been unheard. Great as the waste of British lives had been, in every other country the waste had been far greater. Great as had been her expenditure of treasure, her commerce alone had expanded, while that of other countries had been almost destroyed. These were results of the war worth more than any other claims she might have endeavoured to enforce.

In the general settlement of Europe she took prominent part mainly as a restraining influence. But for Wellington, France would have suffered more severely. The Duke, however, supported by Alexander of Russia, insisted that the country must not connect the Bourbon restoration with its own dismemberment, and it was given back its boundaries as they stood in 1791. British influence was exerted also to check vindictive action on the part of Ferdinand of the Two Sicilies. Britain and Russia also favoured the concession of constitutions, in other words, limitations of absolutism, which were promised by several rulers, since there was some disposition to attribute the comparative success of the United Kingdom in the great struggle to the superiority of its political system, or rather to infer the superiority of its system from its success. But these promises remained unfulfilled. The Tsar's enthusiasm was diverted into a new channel by a new conception of his imperial duties; the claims of authority superseded those of liberty, and though Britain declined to enter the Holy Alliance which was conceived and shaped by Alexander, she offered no effective opposition to its activities.

The Holy Alliance was a very curious phenomenon, which compels us to some further consideration of the European programme at this period. There were two movements fundamentally associated, the first with French Revolution, and the second with the downfall of Napoleon—the democratic movement and the nationalist movement. Before the French Revolution the whole political and social system of very nearly every country in Europe rested upon privilege, upon the conception that certain members of the community were entitled by hereditary or by ecclesiastical right to rule over the rest and to rule in their own interest. In Great Britain, in Holland, and in Switzerland a very much larger proportion of the community at large was permitted to exercise political rights than in other countries; the pressure of privilege there, though sufficiently heavy, was very much less than elsewhere. The French Revolution was primarily on its political side the issue of the demand of the masses of the people for the abolition of political privileges and for their own admission to political rights. The early triumph of the French democracy had merged in Cæsarism, but Cæsarism had not restored the old system of aristocratic



and ecclesiastical privilege. Within limits it confirmed instead of reversing the democratic movement. And it did so outside of France as well as within it. It had had this permanent effect—that it awakened the craving for political liberty throughout the classes hitherto excluded, and especially in those classes which had not been universally excluded.

The Nationalist Movement, on the other hand, was not the cause but the outcome of the long war. For centuries past nationalism had played a strong part in the histories of Britain, France, Spain, and Holland; and the same spirit had been awakened in Prussia comparatively recently by Frederick the Great. Even the French doctrine of natural boundaries had a nationalist basis, because the people within those boundaries were both by race and by language French rather than German or Italian. But outside these countries politicians paid no attention to nationalism; their consideration was bestowed not on nationality but on territory. If one half of the Netherlands had achieved national freedom, the other half had fallen first under the dominion of the Spanish Hapsburgs, then under that of the Austrian Hapsburgs, then under that of France, and finally was transferred by the Congress of Vienna to the newly erected kingdom of Holland. German territories were tossed from one German prince to another. In Germany itself there was no solidarity, no sense of a community of German interests. In Italy principalities and dukedoms had been transferred from one to another of the great Powers in almost every treaty signed during the last three hundred years; there, nationality was simply ignored. But it had been ignored more flagrantly than ever before by Napoleon, and his treatment of Spain, Germany, and Italy had kindled national sentiment to a flame. Hence the phase of the war which followed upon the Moscow expedition was a nationalist uprising, an uprising of the peoples against a foreign tyrant. Throughout Europe the events between 1789 and 1815 had set in motion these two movements, the democratic and the nationalist, which, acting sometimes but not always in combination, were at the root of half the political complications of the nineteenth century.

Now the Holy Alliance was the embodiment of the principle of resistance to both these movements. It was born in the brain of Alexander I., who had hitherto been an ardent advocate of liberal ideas. But behind the liberal ideas lay a rooted conviction of the divine authority which rests in kings. The king is responsible to God but not to his people for the righteous government of his realm. It is good for the people to participate in their own government; therefore the king will do well to allow his people as large a share in the government as they are fit for; but the share must be greater or less or non-existent as the king judges best, and the people have no right to call his judgment to account. They have no right to rise against the divinely constituted authority, or to question it; they have to accept it. Let the kings therefore enter into a Holy Alliance, forming a brotherhood pledged individually to act righteously towards



their own subjects and mutually to support each other's authority and to act in concert. As the divine authority of the king has nothing to do with nationalism, it followed that the Holy Alliance became practically an instrument for enforcing absolutism without regard either to popular rights or to nationalism. Territories were defined by international compact between kings who were pledged to support each other's authority in those territories.

The princes of Europe all joined the league or expressed their sympathy, with the exception of the Sultan of Turkey, who, not being a Christian, was so to speak not eligible. Britain however stood aloof. Neither the king nor the prince regent in his place could join, because such an action would have been absurd on any basis except an absolutist theory which the British constitution expressly rejected. The British people soon saw with displeasure that if, as it boasted, it had by its example saved Europe from the Napoleonic despotism, its victory was going to be turned to account in order to keep Europe under the heel of minor despotisms. It increasingly resented the acquiescence of its Government in the policy of European monarchists ; and it attributed that acquiescence to the absolutist sympathies of the Foreign Minister Castlereagh. For, however strong the reaction had been in England itself, the whole history of the country compelled it to sympathise both with constitutionalism as against absolutism, and with nationalism. What Britons had won for themselves they were willing to see other peoples win.

Nevertheless, in those classes at least which controlled the government the reaction still predominated. They would have resented a curtailment of their own powers, but they continued to be afraid of any extension of political liberty. The spectre of the French Revolution was not laid. Every reformer was assumed to be a covert Jacobin, and it was held that the safety of the state demanded the severe repression of all complaints. Such, too, was the attitude of the Government in an exaggerated degree. Criticism was an offence against order, and discontent a proof of the revolutionary spirit, and again Castlereagh was popularly fixed upon as the moving spirit in the repressive policy of the Government.

The war had caused distress, the price of food had risen to a very high point, and wages had fallen because the supply of labour was greater than the demand ; the more so because the output of the new machinery was very much greater than that of the old hand labour, so that fewer hands were needed, and at the same time the population was increasing at a rapid rate. Expansion of the area of cultivation had, however, hitherto provided some compensation. But the peace increased distress instead of diminishing it. On the Continent industrial occupations revived, while the completeness of the British monopoly of maritime commerce disappeared. The market being overstocked with British goods, British production was checked. In the natural order of events the price of food-stuffs in Britain would have fallen, and the purchasing power of a stationary money wage



would have increased, so that distress should have been reduced. Here, however, the Agricultural Interest in parliament intervened, and the Corn Law of 1815 prohibited the importation of corn whenever the price in the home market was less than eighty shillings a quarter. Thus the high price of food was maintained, while the other conditions were tending to a diminution of wages ; and even the corn tax was insufficient to keep under cultivation much of the land which had been brought under the plough only when the country was compelled to depend wholly upon the supply of food raised within the four seas.

Here, then, is a sufficient indication for immediate purposes of the economic causes of unrest and discontent. And these were aggravated by the wasteful finance of the Government, which continued after the peace the extravagant and ill-irregulated expenditure which the country had borne with during the time of the war. Parliamentary criticism, however, was concentrated upon the better regulation of the civil list, and the abolition of the income tax which had been introduced by Pitt expressly as a war tax. The Government proposed to appropriate the tax to the maintenance of an army of a hundred and fifty thousand men, which, from the point of view of the economists, was an unnecessary extravagance in time of peace ; besides which, expenditure on the army was made the more unpopular by the suspicion that it would be used in the interests of the Holy Alliance. The abolition of the income tax was carried against the Government mainly owing to the energetic agitation of Henry Brougham.

In the country the agricultural and industrial depression brought about disorders and riots, while the Government held fast to its conviction that the remedy for these was to be found in severe repression, not in any attempt to investigate and deal with economic causes. Again the result was to intensify in the sufferers the belief first that relief could be obtained only by their own acquisition of political power, and, secondly, that the acquisition of political power would bring relief as a matter of course. Agitators clamoured against the monarchy and the constitution, and the Government failed to distinguish between agitators and sober reformers. The Spafields riot in December 1816 led in the following year to sharp measures, for the suppression of "seditious meetings" and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Nor was the temper of the ministry improved by a serious rebuff, when a bookseller named Hone was acquitted on three several charges of publishing "blasphemous and seditious libels."

A lull during 1818 was followed by renewed agitation during the next year, culminating in the affair called the Peterloo Massacre, when a large assembly in the neighbourhood of Manchester was dispersed by soldiery, certainly with insufficient reason. Half-a-dozen persons were killed, large numbers who had assembled without any sort of seditious intent were injured, and a feeling of bitter indignation was aroused. Unfortunately the Government identified itself with the action of the magistrates—which might reasonably have been condoned as an error of judgment in a difficult



exigency—and it proceeded to pass a further series of repressive measures known as the Six Acts. Of the six, three were at least justifiable on the hypothesis that there was an appreciable danger of armed insurrection. Two, directed to the suppression of seditious publications, were at best liable to interpretation as a tyrannical interference with the right of free criticism; while the sixth, virtually suppressing all public meetings unless summoned by the principal local authorities, was a wholly inexcusable encroachment upon acknowledged liberties. The general soreness, it may be remarked, was increased by the persistent neglect of the Government to



Cato Street, the scene of the conspiracy of 1820.

[From a contemporary drawing.]

accompany its repressive measures by any recognition of the necessity for remedial legislation.

In 1820 died the old king, who for the last eight years of his life had been entirely incapacitated by brain disease, to which total blindness was added. The Prince Regent became King George IV., but no change was thereby effected. The event of interest which followed immediately upon his accession to the throne was the formation of a wild plot known as the Cato Street Conspiracy. The plotters, who were persons of no importance and no influence, designed to murder the whole ministry at a Cabinet dinner. Information was conveyed to the authorities, and the conspirators, who offered a fierce resistance, were seized in a room in Cato Street. Four of them were executed, five were transported, and the incident was used by the Government as a proof of the anarchical spirit abroad which had made their repressive measures a necessity.

Public uneasiness was made the greater by the absence of any general



sentiment of loyalty to the royal family, for which that family was itself responsible. The old king was held in respect, even in honour and in affection, by many of his subjects who could appreciate his sterling qualities and forgive, if they did not approve, his obstinacy and occasional wrong-headedness. His consort had been a pattern of domestic virtue. But none of the sons of George III. were distinguished by similar characteristics. For a long time the nation's hopes were fixed upon the Princess Charlotte, the daughter of the Prince of Wales, whose premature death in 1817 was generally lamented as a national misfortune. But when she died the old king had no legitimate grandchild living, and of his seven sons and five daughters the youngest was forty. The Prince Regent was held in general contempt as a bad husband and a bad father. The Duke of York had been notoriously mixed up with grave scandals. William, Duke of Clarence, and Edward, Duke of Kent, were at least comparatively respected, but they as well as the youngest brother, Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge, were unmarried. The fifth brother, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, was the object of universal detestation, so much so that his accession to the throne might have sufficed to bring about a revolution, while the sixth brother had contracted a morganatic marriage; so that the future of the monarchy was a subject of grave apprehension. The year after the Princess Charlotte's death the three unmarried brothers took wives, and the birth of the Duke of Kent's daughter, Princess Victoria, in 1819, provided a new object for the hopes of the nation to centre upon, since it was felt that the child's life alone stood in the way of a serious crisis in the early future.

Almost the first proceedings of the new reign brought the Crown into fresh contempt. George IV., when Prince of Wales, though already secretly married morganatically, had taken to wife the Princess Caroline of Brunswick. The two had long lived apart, and the princess had behaved at least with flagrant indiscretion for which George had given her as good excuse as any husband could. On her husband's accession to the throne she returned to England to demand formal recognition as queen, giving her due status in the Courts of Europe. The Government replied by introducing in the House of Lords a bill to deprive her of her title and to dissolve the marriage. Popular feeling ran exceedingly high during the investigation of the charges on which the bill was based. The bill was carried on its second reading in the House of Lords by a majority of twenty-eight; four days later the majority for the third reading was only nine. The Government, now certain to be defeated in the House of Commons, withdrew the bill. Not contented with this effective victory, she attempted in the next year, of course unsuccessfully, to enforce her own coronation along with that of the king, an undignified performance by which she lost most of the popularity which the bill had procured for her. Within three weeks of the coronation she was dead; but the whole of the proceedings had given birth to unlimited scandal, and had displayed the king's character in a singularly odious and contemptible



light which destroyed almost the last shreds of popular respect for the monarchy.

Of more political importance than the elevation of the Prince Regent to the throne were the changes in the ministry which took place at the close of 1821 and during 1822. Lord Sidmouth—formerly Addington, the head of the ministry which had been responsible for the Peace of Amiens—who had been the author of the Six Acts, retired from the Home Secretaryship, in which he was succeeded by Robert Peel. The Marquess Wellesley again joined the Government as Viceroy of Ireland. Then in August 1822 Castlereagh, who was just on the point of setting out to represent Britain at a European Congress assembled at Verona, committed suicide, and was succeeded at the Foreign Office by George Canning. Few ministers have been so intensely unpopular in the country as Castlereagh, and his death was hailed with unseemly acclamations of joy. Posterity has been more just to him than were his contemporaries. To him more than any other man, at least after 1811 if not after 1808, was due the dogged persistence with which the French war was maintained; he, more than any other man, through good and evil report stood by Wellington in the Peninsula War. Less of the responsibility for repressive measures at home belonged to him than was popularly believed; and some at least of the discredit attaching to the foreign policy of the country must be attributed to the popularity achieved by his rival and successor at the Foreign Office, George Canning, and to misrepresentations of Castlereagh's own action.

## II

### CANNING AND HUSKISSON

The return of Canning to the Foreign Office changed British foreign policy not in theory but in practice. Since 1820 the monarchs of the four greater European Powers had been alarmed by revolutionary movements in the Spanish, Italian, and Greek Peninsulas. In Spain and Portugal and in the Two Sicilies the movements were constitutional; that is, they were directed to the establishment of constitutional instead of absolute monarchies. That in Greece was nationalist, and was directed to the liberation of a Christian community from subjection to a Mohammedan power. The Russian, Prussian, and Austrian monarchs were all in favour of common intervention, in arms if necessary, in the former cases. Castlereagh, on the other hand, discouraged this view of the duties of the monarchs of Europe, and clearly declined to make Britain a party to such joint action. Canning adopted Castlereagh's principles, and maintained that every country should be left to settle its own constitution for itself. But Castlereagh had restricted himself to abstention from interference; Canning carried the principle further, and let it be understood that the interference





GEORGE IV AND HIS TRAIN AT HIS CORONATION IN 1821

From one of a series of paintings by Stephanoff made by the king's order.

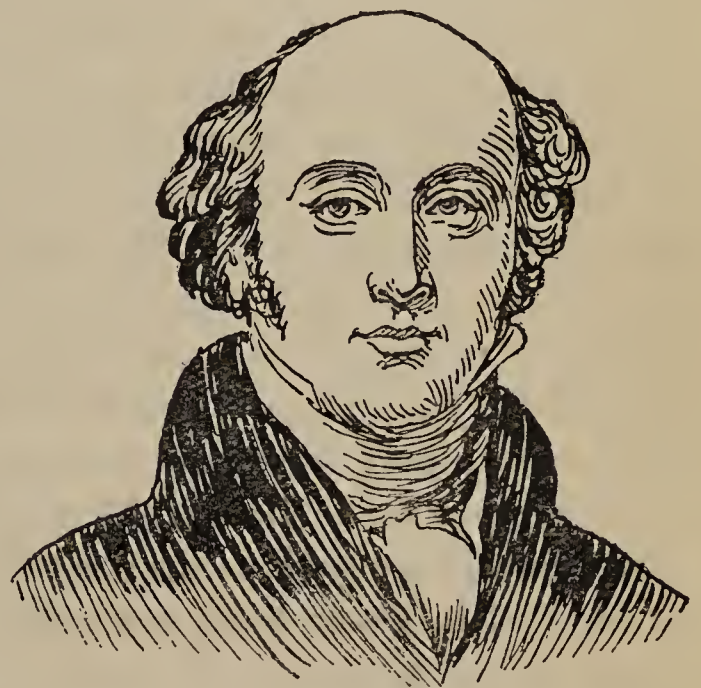






of other Powers on behalf of the absolutist monarchs might compel British intervention on the other side. He repudiated both the doctrine that the Powers were bound to act in concert and the doctrine that they had a right to interfere in the private concerns of their neighbours. His action had at least the effect of preventing other Powers from helping Spain in the reduction of her American colonies which were in revolt; with the result that South America was separated from the Spanish dominion. Castlereagh had in effect permitted the voice of England to be neglected in European affairs. Canning reasserted her right to maintain actively as well as passively the principles of non-intervention. The firmness of Canning's attitude revived British prestige on the Continent, and served as an effective check on the self-appointed champions of absolutism. At the same time he refused to intervene except to prevent intervention.

Modern party terminology makes it difficult to employ necessary words and phrases without conveying misapprehensions. Two great parties have appropriated to themselves respectively the complimentary epithets Liberal and Conservative, although there is no sort of opposition between Conservatism and Liberalism. Leaders of the Liberal party have been men of essentially conservative



George Canning.

[After the portrait by Lawrence.]

mind; leaders of the Conservative party have been men of the broadest sympathies. It is not therefore in a party sense that we speak of the administration after Castlereagh's death as a distinctly Liberal one. In the party sense, an administration whose chiefs were solidly opposed to Parliamentary reform could by no means be described as Liberal. Peel, one of its most active members, was for some twenty years the recognised leader in the House of Commons of the party which began to appropriate the name of Conservatives. Canning had entered public life as the enemy of the French Revolution and all its works, and was an opponent of Parliamentary reform to the day of his death. But Canning was the disciple of Burke and of Pitt, both of whom, until the French Revolution, were conspicuously men of liberal mind, opponents of innovation but especially of reactionary innovation. Canning's sympathies were freely extended to constitutionalist and nationalist movements, as Burke's and Pitt's would have been. Peel does not present himself as the disciple either of Pitt or of Burke. But he was a man who, starting politically with an exceedingly narrow outlook, spent the whole of his life in gradually extending his vision and adopting new views as he slowly realised the force of arguments which ran counter to the postulates with



which he had started. Therefore every administration of which Peel was a member after 1822 was distinguished by liberal measures at least in some particulars.

To Canning and Peel in the Liverpool administration was added William Huskisson, who joined it as President of the Board of Trade early in 1823. We have seen how the Liberalism of Canning displayed itself. That of Peel at the Home Office was shown chiefly in the revision and co-ordination of the Criminal Code. Great Britain in this respect lagged far behind most of the nations of Europe. There were some two hundred offences in the Statute Book to which the death penalty was attached, from petty larceny up to murder. The system defeated itself, as Thomas More had demonstrated three hundred years before. It offered a direct inducement to the petty offender to shield himself by committing murder if murder gave him a chance of escape, since the penalty was the same. It offered an inducement to juries to acquit wherever there was a shadow of excuse for acquittal, because the sentence following upon an adverse verdict was an outrage on their humanity. Under Peel's auspices more than a hundred capital offences were struck off the list. Incidentally London also owed to him the institution of an efficient police force, popularly nicknamed in consequence "Peelers" or "Bobbies," who took the place of the wholly inefficient watchmen or "Charlies," to whose incompetent guardianship the protection of property and the maintenance of order had hitherto been entrusted.

Pitt in his early days had been the pioneer of Free Trade. But further advance in that direction had been stopped by the war, and, when the war closed, the protection of the agricultural interest had been carried to an unprecedented length by the Corn Law of 1815. In a Parliament consisting mainly of landed proprietors or their nominees, the protection of the agricultural interest was ensured, not because it was consciously selfish but because it conscientiously believed that the nation could prosper only if agriculture prospered and that agriculture could not prosper unprotected. The doctrines of Adam Smith, however, had made their way among the commercial community. In 1820 the merchants of London and of Edinburgh presented petitions urging that restrictions on commerce should be limited to taxation for purposes of revenue. It was maintained that free imports did not diminish production, except of goods which cannot compete with those of the foreigner in the open market; that the energy devoted to the production of such goods under a protective system is merely diverted from the production of other goods for which the free-trading country has superior facilities; that in the stress of competition the free-trading country will discover improved methods of production which will still give it an equality if not a superiority in the rivalry. Production will be greater if left to flow along its natural channels than if it is artificially directed by protection into other channels; checks on imports therefore are injurious to trade, and should be admitted only in order to



provide the revenue required for the government of the country. Such was the view of the merchants, though obviously it was not the view of the protected trades, each of which profited individually from the protection extended to itself, while it only shared with the general consumer the burden of higher prices imposed by the protection of other trades.

A sudden and complete reversal of the existing system in accordance with the principles laid down by the mercantile community was obviously not practicable. Free Trade could only be introduced by degrees, giving the producers time to adapt themselves to the changing conditions. But the principles of Free Trade were made the basis of Huskisson's régime. Like Walpole, Huskisson believed in attracting trade and making London the world's central mart. The most effective barrier to doing so was found in the Navigation Acts, which had already served their purpose of securing an immense British maritime preponderance, a preponderance so great that the protection and encouragement once looked upon as a national necessity had become entirely superfluous. The Act now operated only so as to diminish the volume of trade by the partial exclusion of foreign shipping, without providing anything like an equivalent in the expansion of British shipping. Now, moreover, there was a serious danger that foreign countries would retaliate by excluding British shipping from their ports, a process which had proved futile enough in time of war when the British Navy could be brought into play, but would not necessarily be so futile in time of peace. Huskisson's Reciprocity of Duties Act authorised the conclusion of treaties removing the existing restrictions wherever reciprocity was guaranteed. Fifteen such treaties were made between 1824 and 1829. The ruin of the British marine was of course prophesied, but in fact the tonnage of mercantile shipping increased nearly fifty per cent. during the first twenty years after Huskisson's Act was passed, whereas in the preceding twenty years it had increased only ten per cent. The Navigation Laws, however, were not actually deleted from the Statute Book until 1849.

Having dealt with the Navigation Acts, Huskisson proceeded with the reduction of duties. Between 1824 and 1826 several such reductions were made on minor articles. The duties on bar-iron and on cotton goods were lowered seventy per cent., but the most important changes were made with regard to silk and wool. In the case of wool there was hot opposition between the wool-growers and the manufacturers, for the former desired at the same time to have the existing duties on the export of wool abolished and those on its import retained, whereby they would have procured a monopoly of the home market and an extension of their markets abroad. The woollen manufacturers, on the other hand, wanted the export duty increased and the import duties removed, so that they might get their raw material as cheaply as possible. Huskisson compromised by retaining a low duty both on the exports and on the imports. The result was an enormous increase in the imports, but while there was no increase in the



exports the British wool-grower still found an entirely adequate market among the British manufacturers.

Very much the same thing happened with silk. Here there were no objections to the removal of duties on the raw material. The manufacturers wanted to have heavy duties on French silken manufactures but not upon the spun silk which was their raw material; whereas the silk spinners saw ruin staring them in the face if spun silk came in from abroad duty free. Huskisson faced the problem by reducing first the duty on raw silk by about ninety-five per cent., and then that upon spun silk by about fifty per cent. French silks had hitherto been prohibited, consequently they had found their way into England by smuggling. Now a duty was put upon them of thirty per cent. of their value. Thereupon, the demand for silks, which had been checked by the high price and by the vast increase of the cotton manufacture, was greatly augmented, the manufacturers adopted improved and more economical methods, and English silks not only almost drove those of France out of the home market, but were very soon competing successfully with them in the markets of the Continent.

The last year of Liverpool's administration, 1826, was marked by a demonstration of vigour in Canning's foreign policy. His action at an earlier stage had prevented foreign intervention in Portugal, where a constitutional government had been established. Spain was occupied with a civil war of its own, but the royalists there now attempted also to interfere in Portugal. An appeal from the Regent was answered by the mobilisation of a British force and a warning that it would be despatched to Portugal unless the Spanish interference ceased. The measure was effective, and Portugal was left alone.

A new parliament had just met at the beginning of 1827 when a paralytic stroke compelled the retirement of Lord Liverpool. To his exceptional capacities it was due that a Cabinet which contained so many irreconcilables had held together for so long. Peel continued to associate himself with the old Tory element, which was exceedingly distrustful of both Canning and Huskisson, men who belonged to no aristocratic connection and represented ideas which were alarming to the old Toryism. Both were impressed with the evils resulting from the high price of corn maintained by the law of 1815. Both were strong advocates of Catholic Emancipation, which was now becoming a burning question. A Catholic Relief Bill was passed by the House of Commons in 1826, but rejected by the Lords. The substitution of a "sliding scale" for the prohibitive Corn Law was carried and rejected in a like manner early in 1827. About the same time a resolution in favour of Catholic relief was defeated; and now, with a Cabinet whose members held irreconcilable views on leading questions of the day, a new ministry had to be formed. Canning was invited to form it, and a number of the leading Tories who had supported Liverpool immediately withdrew.



Canning was obliged to enter on a virtual alliance with the Whigs, with whom he was in fact by this time very much more in sympathy than with the Tories. But he was not destined to prove whether or no his brilliant talents fitted him for the supreme office. Within four months of his acceptance of the position of Chief Minister, George Canning was dead, leaving to posterity an elusive impression of brilliant but erratic genius, splendid audacity, fiery patriotism, and a puzzling combination of apparently contradictory political principles. For Canning, the advocate of political liberties abroad, was, like Castlereagh and Peel, the determined opponent of political reform at home. The consistent supporter of Catholic Emancipation would have nothing to say to the repeal of the Test Act. The enemy of the Holy Alliance defended the Six Acts and similar measures. In his own day he inspired affection, repulsion, admiration, enthusiasm, but never real confidence. He began public life with the reputation of a political adventurer; he ended it at the moment when the helm of the state had at last been placed in his hands. But he never had the opportunity of showing how he would have used his power.

### III

#### REFORM

On Canning's death he was succeeded as Prime Minister by Lord Goderich who, as Frederick Robinson, had been one of his colleagues for the last four years. There was little change in the ministry, but its strength had lain in the personality of Canning. Goderich was inefficient, and resigned after six months, when the Duke of Wellington was persuaded to undertake the Premiership in spite of his own consciousness that the position was one for which he was thoroughly unfitted. No man was ever more absolutely sincere, more patriotic, more thoroughly disinterested. In certain emergencies, as when he had to deal with the Spaniards or when the victorious allies entered Paris, no man could have shown a cooler brain, a firmer hand, a stronger grasp of the situation. But party politics were entirely outside his range, and he was wholly out of touch with popular feeling; in an independent position his words, his counsels, and his judgment always carried a very great weight, but as the leader of a party he invariably found himself conducting retreats from positions which, very much against his own will, he had learnt to recognise as practically untenable.

Goderich resigned precisely five months after Canning's death. His tenure of office was signalised by only one remarkable event, the battle of Navarino. For some years past the Greeks had been engaged in the struggle for liberation from Turkish rule, for which Lord Byron gave his life. Russia had found it not inconsistent with the principles of the Holy Alliance to encourage the Greeks, with the expectation that by acting on



their behalf she would make her own profit. Canning, also sympathising with Greece, had endeavoured to prevent separate action on the part of Russia, and to work by bringing to bear on the Porte the combined pressure of Britain, Russia, and France. Canning's efforts had culminated in his last public act, the signing of a treaty between the three Powers in July 1827. The Porte remained obdurate, refused a suspension of hostilities against the Greeks, and summoned to its assistance the fleet of its great nominal vassal, Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt. Ibrahim's fleet was lying in the bay of Navarino. In spite of warning from Admiral Codrington, who was in command of the allied French and British squadrons, Ibrahim continued

to take part in the war on the mainland. The allied fleets in October entered the bay of Navarino. The Turco-Egyptian fleet fired upon them and was then annihilated in an action which lasted for four hours, although there had been no declaration of war. Public opinion endorsed the action of the Admirals; but in January Wellington had become Prime Minister, and the King's speech at the opening of Parliament referred to the battle as an "untoward event," a phrase which excited great indignation among the Whigs and the disciples of Canning.



George IV.

[From a sketch made at Ascot Races, 1828.]

In fact it very soon became evident that Wellington's attempt to reconstruct the Liverpool ministry of combined Tories and Canningites was doomed to failure; in a very short time the Canningites, Huskisson and Palmerston, resigned, and Wellington's ministry became an exclusively Tory one, with Robert Peel leading the House of Commons.

In effect the result of Wellington's accession to power was a reversion to the extreme policy of non-intervention, which left Russia very nearly a free hand in settling the Greek question, though the actual terms of settlement were finally arranged by Russia, France, and Britain in concert, and imposed upon both the Greeks and the Turks. The Greek frontier was defined, and Greece was erected into an independent monarchy, with Prince Otho of Bavaria as its king, in 1832.

The Government was Tory, but it spent its time mainly in beating a series of reluctant retreats. Finding that the sense of the House of Commons had at last become strongly in favour of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, it accepted a bill abolishing the Sacramental test and substituting a very mild form of declaration that officers would do nothing to the injury of the Church, although Wellington and Peel, like Canning, had hitherto resolutely opposed any change. Again, the Duke had wrecked



Huskisson's previous proposal to substitute a sliding scale for the Corn Law of 1815. Now he accepted a sliding scale ; that is to say, instead of prohibiting the importation of corn when the price was below eighty shillings, a duty of twenty-three shillings was imposed when the home price was below sixty-four shillings, diminishing as the price rose till it was reduced to one shilling when the price was seventy-three shillings or more.

But the great surrender was on the question of Catholic Emancipation, upon which George III. had taken so obstinate a stand in 1801, and in regard to which George IV. and his brothers had endorsed their father's attitude. The grievance in England was a minor one, chiefly because the Roman Catholics in that country, as in Scotland, were only a fraction of the population, and of these a considerable proportion enjoyed a wealth and a social position which enabled them to exercise a degree even of political influence. But in Ireland more than three-fourths of the population were Catholics, by whom the Protestant ascendancy was felt as an intolerable burden and a monstrous injustice. The refusal of Catholic Emancipation at the time of the Union perpetuated the hostility between Irish Catholics and Protestants, and afforded a just ground for complaint that Irish consent to the Union had been obtained upon false pretences. In course of time the leadership in the Catholic agitation had devolved upon Daniel O'Connell, an orator of extraordinary power, an opponent of the doctrines of the French Revolution, who insisted upon the principles of constitutional agitation and habitually repudiated all appeals to violence and force, though his own fervid appeals to the emotions of an emotional race were not without an inflammatory influence. O'Connell had organised the great Catholic Association, which in theory at least restricted itself to legal forms of agitation and owned no connection with secret societies. Alarmed by its influence, Parliament had in 1825 pronounced it illegal and endeavoured to suppress it ; but it had only been reconstituted under forms which brought it again within the law, though its activities were restrained. Now the landlords had endeavoured to extend their own influence by nominally converting numbers of their tenants into "forty-shilling freeholders," who were entitled to exercise the franchise and on whose unfailing support they hastily counted. Their blunder was decisively demonstrated when in 1828 the Catholic Daniel O'Connell was returned at the head of the poll in an election for County Clare, although his religion disqualified him from sitting in Parliament. The triumph was the greater because the election had been conducted in a perfectly orderly manner. It was easy to understand the meaning of the election, the intensity of the feeling to which it pointed, and the grave dangers which threatened if that feeling were persistently ignored. The Duke and Peel were converted to a belief not that Catholic Emancipation was in itself a desirable thing, but that a worse thing, armed rebellion, was the probable alternative. They chose the lesser of two evils, and in 1829 a bill removing nearly all the



Catholic disabilities was brought in by the Government and carried ; and O'Connell took his seat at Westminster.

In 1830 George IV. died. His influence on political life had not been prominent since the early days when the regency question nearly suspended Pitt's career. But his personal character had lowered the monarchy in public estimation to an unparalleled degree. The country had not become republican in sentiment, but if it had not been able to feel some respect for George's successor the permanence of the monarchy



William IV.

would at best have become exceedingly doubtful. Happily the heir to the throne was William, Duke of Clarence, since the Duke of York had preceded his brother to the grave ; and William was at least an honest man, not unpopular in his character of the Sailor Prince, who had abstained from flagrant offences against the sense of public decency. He was already sixty-five years of age, and during his brief reign the Crown recovered something of its lost prestige, which was to be completely restored by the young girl who was his heir presumptive. It was generally understood that the new king was at least comparatively in sympathy with Liberal ideas.

The cause of Catholic Emancipation had been won by Ireland, not by England, where it excited no enthusiasm. Not so was it with the great question which now confronted the ministry. Half a century before, the popular demand for Parliamentary reform had been gradually forcing its way to the front, though still held back by the antagonism of the governing classes and the private interests vested in rotten boroughs. Both Chatham and his son had advocated it ; but the French Revolution came and swept it out of the sphere of practical politics. There was no room for questions of reform when the guillotine was at work in Paris or while Britain was at grips with her great antagonist. But with the peace came a change. If ministers brought up in the atmosphere of reaction against Jacobinism remained persistently opposed to any extension of political power to the masses who were still shut out from it, or to a diminution of the control exercised by the dominant class, there were still Whigs who had gone out into the wilderness with Fox, and there was a new generation of Whigs who saw no advantages in a system which was calculated to keep them permanently out of office. Moreover, as the



memories of the French Revolution faded, the pre-revolution doctrines of William Pitt began to resume their sway over intelligent minds, while the masses who were still shut outside the gates had learnt to believe that the remedy for their grievances lay in the acquisition of political power, for which their demands grew daily more insistent. Year after year since 1820 Lord John Russell had brought forward in the House of Commons resolutions or proposals for disfranchising rotten boroughs and increasing the representation of the counties, and for the enfranchisement of the towns which were rapidly expanding in consequence of the new industrial system. Russell was regularly defeated, and, while Canning lived, the Canningites held by their leader in opposing reform, although that attitude was not easy to reconcile with some of their avowed principles. With his death their opposition weakened. Then in 1830, within a few weeks of the accession of William IV., the cause of constitutional reform received a new impulse from outside. In France a practically bloodless revolution was accomplished; the absolutist king, Charles X., was forced to abdicate, and the "citizen king," Louis Philippe of Orleans, was raised to the throne. The manner in which the revolution was accomplished served in no small degree to allay the alarms of those who anticipated excesses of the old type as the inevitable concomitants of any departure from the existing system, any shifting of the centre of political gravity. Apart from what was called the "July Revolution," it had already become clear that the demand for reform could not long be ignored, and by that revolution much latent antagonism to it was removed.

The battle began at once. Before the meeting of Parliament in November every one believed that some measure of reform was inevitable. The King's Speech, however, made no mention of the subject. Lord Grey, the leader of the Whigs in the House of Peers, who had been prominent among the advanced Whigs ever since the days of Pitt's first administration, referred to reform as a measure of prime necessity for diminishing public discontent. The Duke in reply declared in effect that the existing system could not by any possibility be improved upon, that the country had entire confidence in it, and that he himself should at all times feel it his duty to oppose any measure of reform. But even this declaration did not suffice to rally to the support of the Government the extreme Tories, who considered that they had been betrayed over Catholic Emancipation. The Government was defeated on a side issue, whereupon the Duke and Peel both resigned, and Grey was invited to form a ministry.

It is curious to observe that the statesman who ultimately carried the Reform Bill was himself of an intensely aristocratic temperament. Of the new administration four members only were in the House of Commons, and of those four one, Lord Palmerston, was an Irish peer, and another, Lord Althorp, the heir to an English earldom. The Lord Chancellor, however, Henry Brougham, was a peer only because he was



made Lord Chancellor. It is to be remarked that the Marquess Wellesley was now in political opposition to his brother, and was associated with the new Government, although not in the Cabinet. A full half of the new ministry were Canningites.

The change of government appears to have given to agitators the impression that the administration would be too weak or too sympathetic to punish disturbances, which broke out in several of the southern counties. They were, however, promptly disillusioned by its vigorous action, and by the prosecution and punishment of the ringleaders. It was unfortunate that the Whigs were seriously weakened by the want of any capable finance minister, since Huskisson was unhappily killed in the summer of 1830 at the opening of the pioneer railway line between Manchester and Liverpool.

In the course of centuries the system of representation had become very much changed. Originally the boroughs returning members had been the substantial towns whose members had been in the main returned by the burgesses. But whether they decayed or progressed these boroughs returned the same number of members as of yore. In many of them the election had been monopolised by the corporations; in others, where the population had fallen off, the few electors had passed completely under the control of some magnate who could secure the return of his own nominee. Under the Tudors, and especially under the Stuarts, many additions had been made to the number of the boroughs, but these were "pocket boroughs" specially created by the Crown not because they were substantial towns but because they were under the Crown's control. Many of these also had since passed into the hands of magnates. New towns had grown up with large populations, especially since the development of machinery and the factory system had compelled the congregating of workers together; these towns remained unrepresented. The general effect was that in 1830 there were one hundred and fifty-seven members of Parliament who were the direct nominees of eighty-four persons, and another hundred and fifty whose election was practically controlled by seventy persons. In Scotland and Ireland the proportion of nominees was still greater. The enormous power exercised by landed magnates in returning members to the House of Commons obviously went a long way towards ensuring a tolerable harmony between the Representative Chamber and the House of Lords. That power a reformed system could not fail to destroy, and with it the effective supremacy of the oligarchical families in the government of the country.

But it was not the intention of the Whig leader to introduce a democracy, a government controlled by the masses of the people. A rational extension of the franchise to substantial citizens, a system which gave a real representation to the electors bearing some proportion to their numbers and their fitness for the exercise of political power, was the object aimed at by the author of the Reform Bill of 1831. The ten-



pound householder in the boroughs, the ten-pound copyholder and the fifty-pound leaseholder in the counties, were to have the franchise. Corresponding changes were to be made in Scotland and Ireland. Boroughs with less than two thousand inhabitants were to be disfranchised altogether; those with less than four thousand were to return only one member. Out of some hundred and seventy seats thus abolished something over a hundred were to be re-allotted to counties, to great towns, or to Scotland or Ireland, the total number of seats being thus considerably diminished.

The king before his accession had kept himself politically in the background, but had been on the whole associated with the Whigs rather than the Tories. He was now definitely in favour of a moderate reform, and was well satisfied to find that Grey's bill made no concession to the extremists, as they were then considered, who demanded manhood suffrage, annual Parliaments, and the ballot. The bill was passed in the House of Commons on the first reading without a division; but on the second reading the Government were able to secure a majority of only one in a very full house. A few days later an amendment to which they were opposed was carried, whereupon the king immediately dissolved Parliament, and at the general election, when the whole country rang with the cry of "The bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill," Government was so strongly supported that its majority on the second reading was in the proportion of five to three. Though the Opposition fought stubbornly, the only material amendment was one which extended the franchise in the counties to £50 tenants-at-will, such men having a very strong tendency to vote with their landlords. The majority on the third reading was not substantially reduced.

The king, however, was very much afraid of a collision between the two Houses, and though he approved the bill himself, urged Grey to modify it with a view to ensuring its acceptance by the peers. Grey stood firm, and the king's anxiety was justified. After a brilliant debate the Lords rejected the bill in October by a majority of forty-one. In the weeks following the rejection of the bill, public excitement was roused to a very high pitch. In many parts of the country and especially at Bristol there were serious riots. Grey was determined to bring the bill in again with little modification. Negotiations with a view to compromise came to nothing. When the new session was opened in December there were changes, but not of principle. A slight variation in the basis of disfranchisement, and the preservation of the existing number of seats without diminution, reduced the number of seats cancelled to about a hundred and forty and further increased the representation of the counties and of new boroughs. The bill was carried on the second reading in the Commons, this time by a majority of two to one, and on the third reading the majority was again larger than in the case of the previous bill.

The king was intensely opposed to coercing the peers by a creation



which would swamp their majority. Grey, with his aristocratic instincts, was extremely anxious to avoid such a step, but still held to it as a power to be used in the last resort ; and he was authorised to say that in the last resort the power might be exercised. The peers were induced to pass the second reading, though by a majority of only nine. The king was taking alarm at the temper which was being displayed in the country, and his own most conservative instincts were being disturbed. The Opposition felt emboldened, and three weeks later carried an amendment which in effect shelved the bill. Grey thereupon advised the creation of a number of peers sufficient to ensure the passing of the bill, with the resignation of the ministry as the alternative. The king accepted their resignation, and called upon Wellington to form an administration for the purpose of carrying a modified Reform Bill. The Duke, who considered it his duty to suppress his personal views and to carry out the king's wishes, tried to do so, but Peel refused to join him. A week was long enough to prove that the attempt was hopeless, and the king recalled Grey. Wellington was informed that the necessities of the case would be met by the abstention of a sufficient number of peers to allow the passage of the bill. Accepting this course as preferable to the creation of fifty new peers, the Duke persuaded some hundred of the lords to withdraw, and the bill was carried, receiving the royal assent on June 7th.

Limited as the franchise still was, so that the manual labourers, conventionally described as the "working classes," continued to be excluded from it, the great Reform Bill nevertheless destroyed the old oligarchy and transferred the political centre of gravity to the middle class. Corresponding changes were made in Scotland and Ireland, where the representation of the former was increased by eight members and of the latter by five.

#### IV

#### INDIA AND THE COLONIES

In India Lord Hastings, like his predecessors, continued after the war with Nepal to find it impossible to avoid native wars and the expansion of British dominion. The treatment of the Marathas after the removal of Lord Wellesley had in fact encouraged them to watch for opportunities of further aggression. Sheltered by the Maratha chiefs, large bodies of lawless soldiery known as Pindáris or Patháns established themselves within Maratha territory and carried their devastations all over Central India. British protests were met by promises which were left carefully unfulfilled, and it was impossible to doubt that it was the intention of the confederacy to foster and encourage the Pindáris as allies, by whose aid the British authority could be set at defiance. It became clear to Hastings that the



preservation of order and security in India imperatively demanded the suppression of these robber bands which held the whole peaceful population in terror. In 1816 George Canning had become President of the Board of Control, and, realising the nature of the emergency and the appalling character of the Pindári raids, he gave Hastings a free hand.

Accordingly in 1817 Hastings opened his campaign for the suppression of the Pindáris, the

operations being on a scale very much larger than had ever before been undertaken in India; for as matters stood, it was practically certain that unless an overwhelming force were employed the entire Maratha confederacy would take part with the robber hordes. Sindhia, fortunately for himself, was isolated and paralysed for action by the disposition of the British troops. Elsewhere, however, although the Pindári chiefs were quickly forced to a formal submission, both the Peishwa and the Bhonsla attacked the British, and the Pindári campaign was converted into a Maratha war. The general results were as

concerned Sindhia that the British extended their protection to the Rajput states, over which he had usurped an ascendancy which the Rajputs abominated. At Nagpur a new Bhonsla was set up, who was a minor, and the administration was temporarily taken over by the British. The Patháns and Pindáris were completely broken up and many of them were absorbed into the British sepoy army. The young Holkar accepted a subsidiary alliance of the normal type which was already in force with the Gaekwar. But the whole of the territories of the Peishwa, with the exception of the state of Satara, were annexed, and the Peishwa himself was removed to an estate on the Ganges basin with the enjoyment of an exceedingly substantial pension. Satara was reserved to the puppet



India in the early nineteenth century.



“royal” family of the Marathas, the descendants of Sivaji, the founder of the Maratha power.

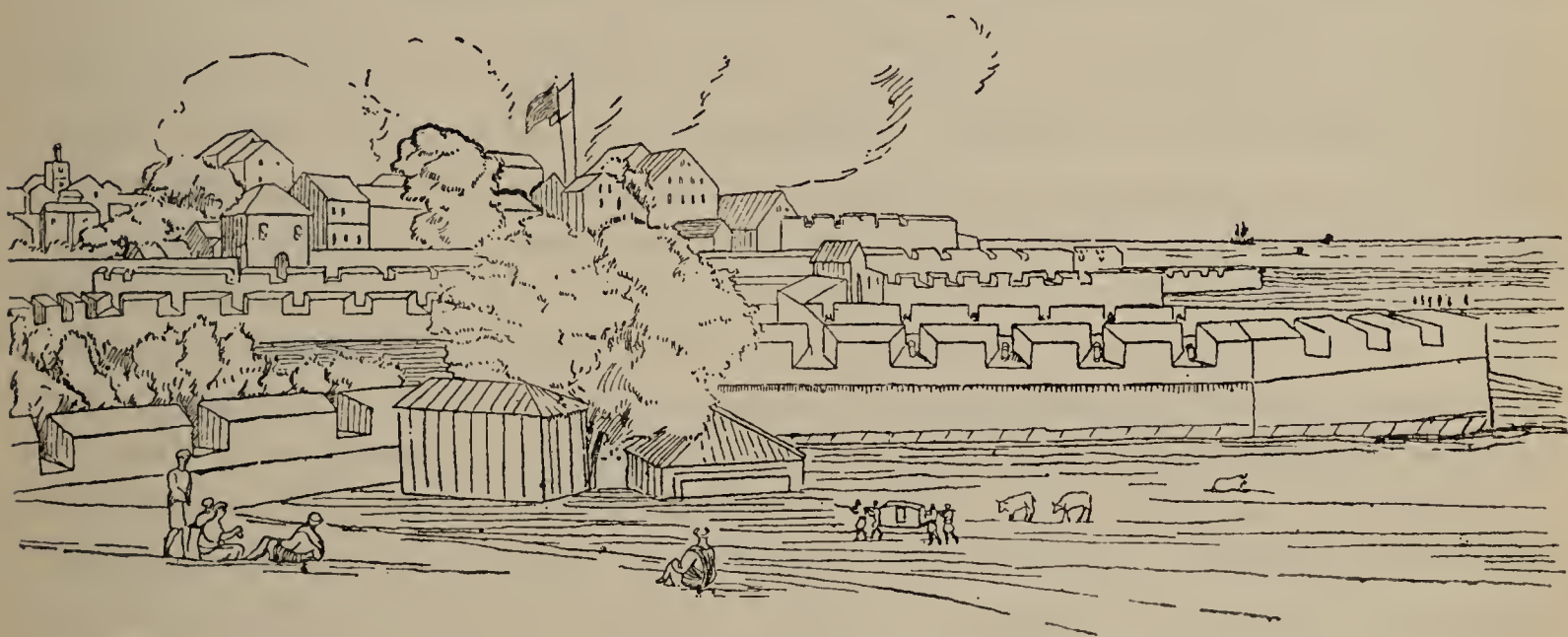
By way of contrast to the penalties of increased formal dependence imposed upon the Maratha states, a more dignified status was offered to the two great Mohammedan princes, the Nizam and the Wazir of Oudh, as the reward of their loyalty. Both were officially lieutenants of the Mogul, whose legal dignity Wellesley had made a point of upholding. Hastings now offered to both the title of king or “Padishah,” implying an independent monarchy. Behind the offer lay the intention of diminishing the prestige of the titular sovereign of India, a step viewed with extreme suspicion by the Mussulman population, though not with any special disfavour by the Hindus. The Nizam disdained the proffered honour as being inconsistent with his loyalty to the Mogul; the Wazir of Oudh was less scrupulous, and became henceforth the king of Oudh. It must be remarked at the same time, with regard to the treatment of the Marathas, that the Peishwa had for the last century been the nominal head of the Maratha confederacy which, when united, had hitherto been the one great Hindu power in the Peninsula. There was now no Peishwa, no one with a traditional title to be regarded as the head of the Marathas. Thus the total result in 1819 was not merely the addition of extensive territory to the British dominion, but a marked step towards the formal assertion of actual British sovereignty.

Three years later Lord Hastings resigned; but for the suicide of Castle-reagh George Canning would have succeeded him as Governor-General. But Canning was needed at the Foreign Office, and the Indian appointment was given to Lord Amherst. Once more expansion was forced upon the Governor-General, but not in the peninsula itself. This time the challenge came from Burmah, which lay beyond the sphere of operations of the various empires which had dominated India. The Burmese were racially distinct from the peoples of India, being more nearly akin to the Chinese; moreover they were Buddhists, a religion which had taken its rise in Hindustan but had failed to retain its hold there, while it established its ascendancy among the peoples beyond the mountains on the east and north. The Burmese empire was extensive, but it was in a great degree isolated from India by the barrier of the mountains and the sea; and the Burmese emperor suffered from illusions as to his own power and that of the British. Before Lord Hastings left India the Burmese monarch demanded from him the “restoration” of that part of Bengal which lay on the north-east of the Ganges Delta, which, of course, had never belonged to Burmah at all. Hastings had treated this communication as a forgery. But when Amherst arrived he found that the Burmese were taking aggressive action on the frontier. His warnings were treated with contempt as impertinences, and it at once became obvious that an appeal must be made to force. In May 1824 an expedition was despatched to Pegu, which occupied Rangoon; but the character of the climate and the country



delayed further operations till the winter. It was not till the autumn of the next year that the progress of the British forces impressed upon the Burmese the fact that they had aroused a dangerous enemy; and it was only after some more severe defeats that the Burmese monarch was induced to accept the British terms. Assam, Arakan, and Tenasserim were annexed, and a British Resident was admitted to the Burmese capital at Ava. The nearest equivalent in the West of the term Resident as employed in Indian politics is Ambassador.

Unfortunately, there had been much mismanagement in the conduct of the Burmese war, so that what ought to have been a short and sharp campaign was dragged out over a couple of years. A bad impression was produced in India itself, and the principality of Bhartpur lying on the west of the river Jumna tried the experiment of defying British intervention.



Bombay Fort in the early nineteenth century.

[From a drawing by William Westall, A.R.A.]

The result was that the citadel of Bhartpur, which had been regarded as impregnable, was captured, and British invincibility was decisively reasserted. The fall of Bhartpur impressed the native mind more strikingly than the operations of the Pindári war, and sixteen years passed before any other attempt was made to challenge British authority. In the Punjab, beyond the Sutlej, Ranjit Singh had consolidated an exceedingly powerful monarchy since the beginning of the century; but that very shrewd ruler consistently through all his life realised that the British were not to be challenged; and in all his relations with them took very good care not to transgress those limits of his activities imposed by the danger of a direct collision with the Lords Paramount of India.

After Bhartpur, then, the interests of our Indian history for several years centre entirely in administrative reforms associated mainly with the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck.

Bentinck, who succeeded Amherst in 1828, may be taken as representing the more liberal spirit which was predominant in British politics after the



retirement of Lord Liverpool, a spirit in which the principal danger for India lay in the disposition of the government to assume the appropriateness of Western ideas to Eastern conditions. The gains effected in actual administration, in the increased security of life and property, the improvement of material conditions, and the spread of education, were enormous, though in some respects sufficient account was not taken of native traditions and native prejudices, which were not fully understood. But the wisdom of the main lines followed, and the great preponderance of beneficial results, are beyond dispute.

Four reforms in particular may be emphasised, the abolition of practices of an essentially barbarous character. The first of these was *sati*—the Hindu custom that when a man died his widow should sacrifice herself on his funeral pyre. In theory the action was voluntary, an act of self-dedication; in practice it was habitually forced upon reluctant victims. Bentinck ventured on the suppression, in spite of very great fears that it would be followed by an outburst of fanaticism; but the expectation happily proved to be without foundation. A very much more difficult affair was the suppression of *thuggee*. The thugs were a secret society with ramifications all over India devoted to robbery and murder, principally committed on the persons of lonely travellers who vanished and left no trace. The thugs were believed to work under the protection of a particularly powerful goddess, and so great were the material and superstitious terrors which they inspired that there was extraordinary difficulty in procuring any sort of evidence against them; nevertheless the work was accomplished, mainly by the persistent energy and skill of Colonel Sleeman. Even the existence of the organisation had been previously unsuspected by the authorities. Yet ten years after Sleeman commenced his operations, it had practically ceased to exist.

The third was the organised system of brigandage known as *dacoity*, in which large numbers of apparently respectable persons were found to be concerned. Here, again, the process of identification and the collection of evidence presented extraordinary difficulties, and several years elapsed before fear of the law overpowered fear of the dacoits. The fourth evil practice successfully put down was that of infanticide, the habitual murder of girl babies, a practice which had arisen out of the crushing cost of marriages, while the marrying of daughters was looked upon as an imperative religious duty. Here the suppression was effected by removing the main motive for the custom rather than by punishing the offence, for the difficulty of proving that an infant had been murdered was enormous. The matter therefore was dealt with by legal restrictions on the expenditure at marriages and the exclusion from the attendant ceremonies of the hordes of beggars on whom it was considered a religious duty to bestow alms on such occasions. Other reforms belong also to the period of Bentinck's administration, which have to be associated with the more decisive ascendancy of Whig doctrine that came into force after the carrying of the Reform Bill.



The history of Colonial Expansion during this period is not marked by striking events. In the Canadas certain family groups became established as a dominant political aristocracy which monopolised administrative appointments and administrative control, somewhat as the Undertakers had done in Ireland before the Union. There was therefore growing discontent, especially in Lower Canada, where the population was mainly French and Catholic, while the group leagued in what was called the Family Compact was British and Protestant. Matters however did not come to a head until about the time when Queen Victoria succeeded her uncle on the British throne. Another point to be observed, however, is that the pressure of industrial troubles in the British Isles, with other causes, brought about an increasing emigration especially from Scotland, which added a democratic element in the Canadas, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.

In South Africa the British population began to accumulate beside the descendants of the Dutch and French Huguenot families which had been in possession for a couple of centuries. The new settlers were planted largely between Capetown and the Kaffir districts on the east, and this increased the risk of collisions with the natives. For some time, however, there was as little interference with or alteration in the Dutch laws and institutions as in the case of the French in Canada. But before 1830 the government, which was still in the hands of a Governor and a nominated Council, began to introduce changes in accordance with British ideas, very much to the offence of the extremely conservative and suspicious Dutch population. The changes in themselves were undoubtedly improvements; the objection to them lay in the fact that they were resented and misunderstood by the people upon whom they were forced in a manner which did not attempt to be tactful. It was particularly ominous of trouble that the British authorities were moved by prevalent humanitarian sentiments, and were inclined to go as much too far in crediting the native races with a capacity for the immediate development of the virtues of civilisation as the Dutch, in accordance with their own tradition, went too far in treating them as belonging to a lower and distinctly vicious order of creation. Again these effects were to make themselves more prominently felt after the passage of the Reform Bill in London.

Lastly, we have to record the slow progress of colonisation in Australia. The first colony of New South Wales with its nucleus at Sydney included Tasmania as well as the East Australian seaboard. Soldiers and convicts, when their term of service expired, were allowed to settle on the land under the control of a military governor. In 1812 Tasmania was separated from New South Wales. The arrival of other settlers was slow, the convict settlements having a repelling effect. But after the peace M'Quarrie, the Governor of New South Wales, made energetic efforts to encourage immigration, and received assistance both in the shape of expenditure by the imperial government and from the agricultural and industrial depression which was driving emigrants still more rapidly both to Canada and



to South Africa. By 1826 there were thirty thousand inhabitants in New South Wales, and the free settlers from home considerably outnumbered the convict group. Between 1813 and 1831 a good deal of exploration was carried out, and vast areas were taken up for sheep farming. The new colony of Western Australia was started in 1829, and marked the beginning of a new movement towards expansion, having its sources in England.



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE ERA

#### I

#### THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

AT the moment when the younger Pitt came into power in 1784, England and Scotland were beginning to feel the first effects of the impulses and the inventions which in the course of fifty years revolutionised the industrial system and changed the bases of the whole social structure. The tools worked by hand were already largely displaced by machinery driven by water-power ; already the initial difficulties which James Watt had found in making his steam-engine workable had been mastered, and steam-power was being applied to mills. Already the development of a canal system had provided new facilities of transport and immensely increased traffic, and already the renewed process of enclosure was submerging the yeoman. Before the next fifty years were over, steam had become the driving power of the machinery which made Great Britain the world's workshop ; steam had been at last applied to locomotion, so that as concerns traffic the changes brought about by the canals were on the verge of becoming relatively insignificant ; and a few years were to see the steamship on its way to supersede the sailing vessel. The yeoman had disappeared altogether, and the main population of England was no longer rural but had become urban. A new phenomenon in the world's history, an industrial nation, had come into being, pregnant with new problems. And society was barely beginning to think of adjusting itself to the new conditions, barely beginning to realise that the conditions were new and unprecedented. It was still unable to distinguish between the social revolution born in France, a revolt against feudalism, a revolution of ideas, and the economic revolution born in England, a revolution in material conditions.

The application of water-power meant the setting up of machinery and the aggregation of workers where water-power was available. The application of steam-power meant the setting up of machinery and the aggregation of workers where coal was readily available. The demands of the new machinery for coal and iron gathered workers to the coal-fields and the iron-fields. These causes combined to shift the weight of population from the south to the north ; it made the northern counties the most populous instead of the least populous area of the kingdom, and turned places which



had been unimportant villages into crowded towns. But the population multiplied more rapidly than the employment increased; and so long as the increased output of machinery outstripped the increased demand for goods which followed upon the lessened cost of production, the setting up of machinery diminished employment. Machinery appeared to the labourer to be a device to enable rich men to take the bread out of the mouths of the poor. They had no chance of realising that in the long run machinery would mean increased employment; and even if they had been able to realise it, the prospect of good wages in the remote future did not



The extended dress of 1789.  
[From a print.]

compensate for low wages or none in the present. Therefore in the eyes of the working men machinery was an evil thing; and with low wages and short employment came outbreaks of machine-smashing and general violence, which kept alive the conviction that only by stern repression could the country be saved from a repetition of the horrors which had taken place in France.

The fear of Jacobinism, not the desire to control labour in the interests of capital, was the reason of the laws which in 1799 and 1800 prohibited combinations and unions whether of masters or of workmen. The Government looked upon associations as in themselves dangerous, as instruments which would be unscrupulously directed to the subversion of the political and social order. But in fact under the new conditions the prohibition of unions placed the employed at the mercy of the employers. Con-

certed action on the part of employers as well as concerted action on the part of the men was made illegal, but it did not practically affect them. Unless the men acted in concert, the individual master could always get as many individual men as he required on his own terms. In effect, therefore, the law intervened on behalf of the masters against the men, while in theory it was applying one rule to both. The obvious conclusion for the labouring man was that the law was made in the interest of the employer by the governing class to which the employer belonged, and there would be no fair play for the working man until he got the making of the laws into his own hands.

Until the end of the eighteenth century our own history presents us with few signs of class hostility either widely spread or bitter, after the period of the great Peasant Revolt. Even Jack Cade's rebellion in the middle of the fifteenth century was not a revolt of the lower against the upper classes in the social scale; that character was attributed to it only by later writers; and for that view there was no better ground



than that the leaders made use of such discontent as survived among the peasantry to increase their following. The revolts in the Tudor period were not risings of class against class, of poor against rich, but were the outcome of quite specific grievances. The Great Rebellion was in no sense a war of classes. There was no widespread sense of antagonism between labour and capital. But that was precisely the new sense which was brought into being by the new manufacture. Until the new manufacture came into play the labourer himself possessed the tools of his trade. For the most part also his trade was not his sole means of livelihood. But with the new manufacture, accompanied by the new period of enclosure, his trade became his sole means of livelihood, and he was entirely dependent on the employer, who owned the whole machinery of production. The disappearance of the yeoman, and of the cottar who derived a part of his living from the plot of ground which he occupied, drew a sharper distinction between the capitalist class which paid wages for labour and the labouring class which gave labour for wages, between the wage payers and the wage earners. And precisely at the moment when the severance of classes was becoming more definite and marked came the French Revolution, the uprising of oppressed against oppressing classes, which, looked at from another point of view, was an anarchical revolt against all lawful authority. It was inevitable that the one point of view should be adopted by the dependent classes who had no share in the government and the other by the class on whom they were dependent, who monopolised the government. It was inevitable also that the two classes should conceive of their respective interests as mutually antagonistic. The employer, conscious of his own intention to be just, was indignant because the operative did not recognise his justice; the operative could see no justice in a system under which his wages were low and precarious while the employer grew rich, as he argued, upon the proceeds of his toil. The new manufacturing conditions, therefore, created an antagonism between labour and capital for which the old conditions had provided no basis.

In the agricultural districts, however, the effect was not quite the same; the cottar-holding, the small farm, and the open field, were absorbed into large farms, and the large fields partitioned by hedgerows came into existence, which we have learned to look upon as the characteristic of English landscape in all agricultural districts. The small farmer and the cottar were turned into wage-earning agricultural labourers; but the wage-payer was the large farmer, not the landowner. The large farmer could conduct his operations with a very much more economical distribution of labour than was possible under the old system; but the antagonism between the rural wage-payers and wage-earners was very much modified by the new application of the Poor Law. With a large overplus of labour on the market, wages were low and employment was insufficient. The powers bestowed upon the magistrates by Gilbert's Act were brought into play;



the Speenhamland Board led the disastrous way by supplementing wages out of rates, and other boards all over the country followed suit. Wherever wages were below a certain level an allowance was made to the labourer, and that allowance was increased according to the size of his family. Thus a subsistence was secured to the labourer, while he was encouraged to increase his family and replenish the earth, since the enlargement of the population was regarded as an object of national importance, emphasised by the war. But the system, while it preserved the labourer from destitution, at the same time deprived him of all sense of responsibility. It



"Royal Affability."

[A caricature by Gillray of George III.'s interest in Agriculture.]

destroyed the relation between work and wages, because whether wages were high or low, subsistence was secured; and the farmer did not realise that he was making up by the payment of high rates what he saved by the payment of low wages.

The war too came to help the agricultural community in another way. While the rapid increase of the population necessitated an increased food supply, the war prevented that supply from being supplemented from abroad. The price of corn rose, and it became possible to bring under cultivation great areas of land which it had not before paid to put under the plough; thus employment was increased. The prices which made the cultivation of inferior land pay made the better land pay enormously; the landlords were able

to obtain very high rents, while the farmer still pocketed large profits. The price of corn was fixed at that which made the poorer land pay, because if it had been lowered the poorer land would have gone out of cultivation, the supply would have run short, and the price would have gone up again.

The war came to an end, and the agricultural interest, landlords, farmers, and labourers, were faced with the prospect of lowered prices. Land would go out of cultivation since the supply of food would be made good from abroad. Employment would diminish; the capital expended on extension would be thrown away. The farmers' profits would fall, the landlords' rents would fall. Both landlords and farmers had acquired the habit of living up to the large incomes which the war had brought them, and retrenchment would be exceedingly difficult; to many of them it would in effect mean ruin. And beyond their personal interests there were, it appeared, national interests at stake. The country would no



longer grow a supply of food sufficient for its own need ; it had only been able to do so during the war by bringing the poorer land under cultivation. If a new war came, that land could not be at once brought under cultivation again, and the country would be starved out. Without any consciousness of self-interested motives, the agricultural interest demanded that the price of corn must be maintained ; and it procured the enactment of the Corn Law of 1815, which kept up the high price of living for the population at large without securing to the agricultural interest the war rates of profit, while the steady multiplication of the mouths to be fed made it yearly more impossible that the country should continue even under the most favourable conditions to be self-sufficing in its food supply.

Here, then, we may note an essential difference in the nature of the opposition between classes in the France of the French Revolution and the England of the Industrial Revolution. In France the primary opposition was between classes which stood legally on a different footing ; the privileged class consisted of the hereditary lords both of the soil and of its occupants, a group which was exempted from burdens while enjoying the exclusive possession of political rights. In England the technical distinctions between classes recognised by the law were very few. The political privilege of sitting by hereditary right in one of the chambers of the legislature carried with it

no exemptions from public burdens. The lords of the soil were in no sense lords of its occupants, and could not command their services ; while, instead of being exempt from public burdens, they provided through the land tax a very large proportion of the revenue. The self-made burgess and merchant had the same political rights as the landowner ; they and the landowners who were commoners were not even barred from the prospect of acquiring the additional political rights of Peers of the Realm ; the law recognised no aristocratic caste. Politically it drew the line between persons possessed of a certain amount of property and the rest, but in theory there was nothing to prevent any number of the rest from crossing the line by becoming possessed of the necessary amount of property. The antagonism was between wealth and poverty, and it only became acute when translated into terms of Capital and Labour. As often as not, the capitalist himself or his father had risen from the ranks by a combination of intelligence, energy, and good fortune, in which he probably allowed much less credit to the last element than his neighbours were inclined to do. If the law intervened between him and



“Farmer” George.

[From Gillray's caricature.]



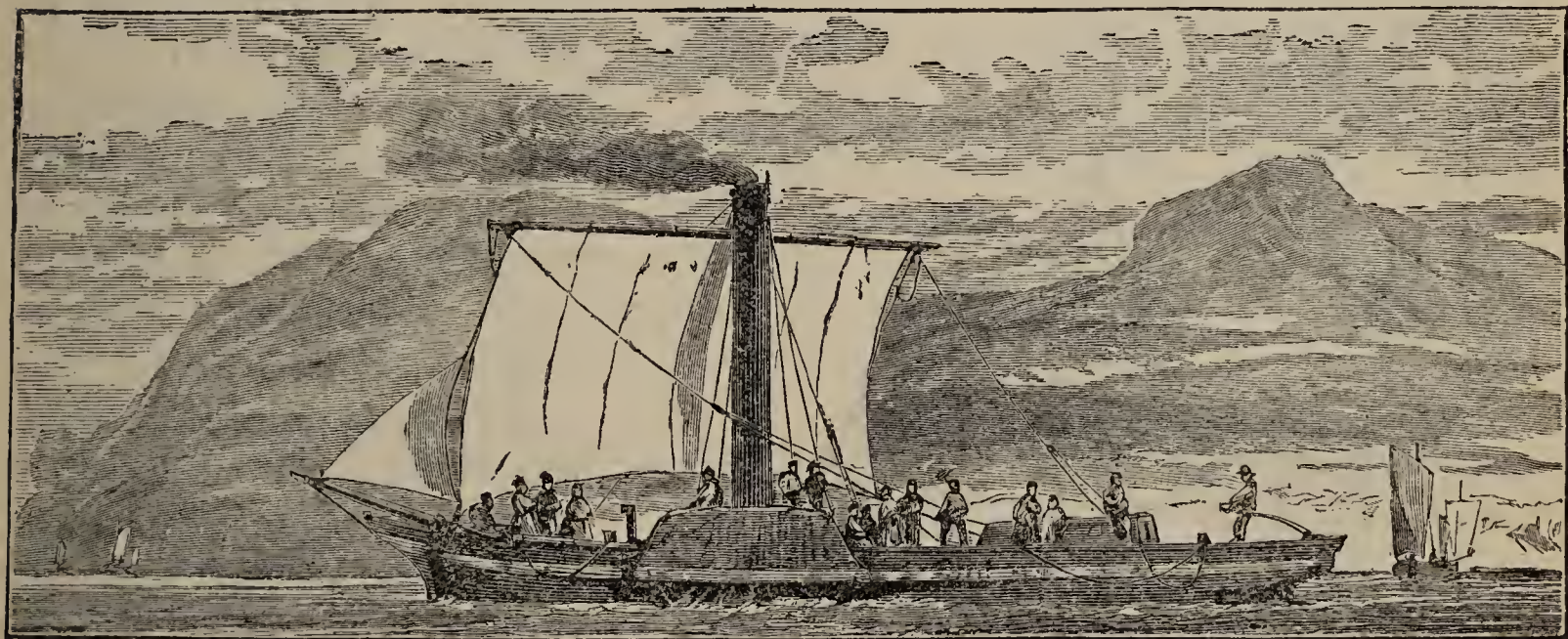
his workmen it was only to insist that neither should coerce the other by combination. It did not strike the employer that whereas the individual workman could by no possibility coerce him, there was no difficulty whatever in his coercing the individual workman. Nor did it strike him that while he could set the law in motion against the workman who broke it, the individual workman was quite incapable of reversing the process; whereby the law, nominally even-handed, could be called in to his support if he wanted it but not to that of the workman. Yet it was this fact which convinced the workman that the law was on the side of the capitalist, and would only cease to be so when the workman himself had the making of it. In short, the antagonism in France was between the peasant and the bourgeois on the one side and the aristocrat on the other; in England it was between the workman and the capitalist employer.

The interests of the employer and the interests of the workman were opposed on the broad principle that it was to the advantage of the former to procure labour at the lowest possible wage. If there were employers who realised that they could get better value by paying higher wages, they were rare. Nearly all of those who paid more than the lowest available rates did so from motives of humanity, believing that they were acting to the detriment of their own material interests. While the supply of labour exceeded the demand, and employers remained convinced that cheap labour served their interest, labour could hope for improved conditions only through legislation or combination. But it was vain to look to legislation unless it obtained control of the legislature. It was useless to look to combination; for even before the eighteenth century the judges were treating organisation as conspiracy under the common law, and in the last two years of the century the combination laws made concerted action on the part of men or masters a specific offence. The workmen were debarred even from combining to set the law in motion; and being able to act only as individuals, for practical purposes they could not act at all, even when masters acted illegally. Magistrates had power to impose a scale of wages on the masters, but if the men combined to compel the masters to pay according to the scale they were sent to prison; while obviously it would have been perfectly futile for individual workmen acting separately to claim at law the wage to which they were legally entitled.

The law, however, did not operate effectively against all combinations, but chiefly against those of unskilled workmen, who were suspected of being as a matter of course revolutionaries. It was recognised that the skilled workman had a stake in society and a consequent preference for the preservation of law and order. Action was taken against combinations only at the instance of masters, and in the skilled trades masters were rather favourably inclined to combinations among the men. Hence it came about that in the reign of George IV. a successful movement for the repeal of the Combination Laws was carried through, which took its rise in the



skilled, not in the unskilled trades. It was the belief of the prime mover, Francis Place, that freedom of combination would at once procure an adjustment of outstanding questions reasonably satisfactory both to masters and men, which would make the continued existence of combinations superfluous. Place procured the passage of the bills of 1824 and 1825 by exceedingly clever management, and there is not much doubt that he would have failed if Parliament had realised what it was doing. But the actual effect was to secure the legality of collective bargaining and of collective withdrawal from work—in other words, striking—though there still remained to the judges a large latitude for discovering conspiracy under the common law. The repeal of the Combination Acts, however, only for a moment diverted the workmen from their conviction that the remedy for their grievances lay in the acquisition of political power. The immediate



The first steamboat, the *Comet*, on the Clyde.

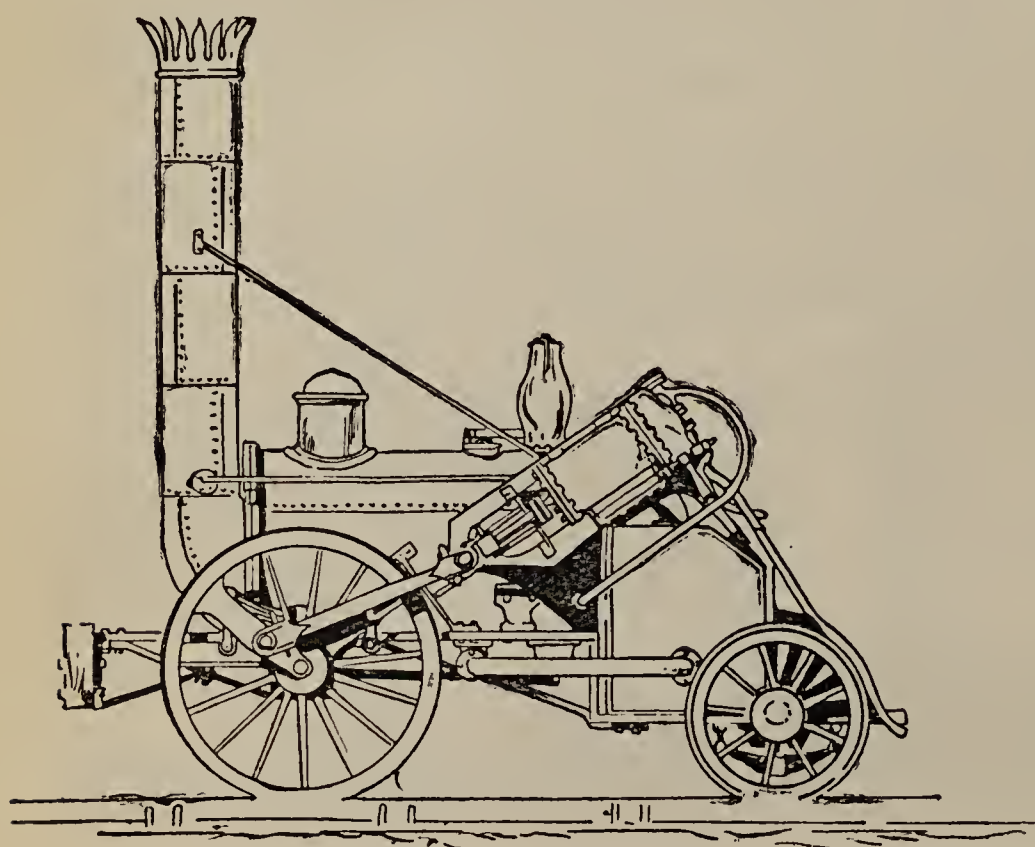
[From a print of 1812.]

effect was the birth of a large number of trade unions; but the moment was unfortunate. A period of trade depression set in, unemployment increased, and the new unions were unable to prevent the lowering of wages. Therefore the impression rapidly prevailed that combination was unable to procure the anticipated benefits. So when the Reform Bill came, the working classes were angry and disappointed, because they still remained shut out from political power; while the governing classes rejoiced that reform had been carried far enough to secure stability, but had stopped short of admitting the dangerous elements of the population to the franchise.

Long before the accession of King George IV. steam had taken complete possession of manufacture. Water-power had had its brief day as the predominant agent, and the old domestic industries had vanished completely. But there was still one more change to be effected by steam through its application to locomotion. Steam traction by land first began to appear practicable when iron rails were used to make an easy road for



trucks. The first railroad was not intended for steam traction ; it was in fact a horse tramway between Wandsworth and Reigate. But the invention of a locomotive steam-engine was engaging the attention of engineers. In 1812 a boat propelled by steam was launched on the Clyde, and two years later George Stephenson had built his first locomotive engine. The first railway authorised by Act of Parliament to carry passengers was that between Darlington and Stockton, sanctioned in 1823. It was due to the persuasions of George Stephenson that the steam locomotive instead of horse haulage was permitted. The difficulties which faced these early attempts are illustrated by the fact that the first endeavours to get this line



Stephenson's locomotive, the "Rocket."

authorised were blocked by the Duke of Cleveland, because a portion of the line was required to pass through his estate. Without compulsory powers of purchase it was impossible to lay down a line of any length if any landowner chose to block the way. Moreover, superior persons scoffed at the engineers, and pointed out that the sane British public would most certainly refuse to allow itself to be carried over the ground at the terrific speed of sixteen miles an hour.

Nevertheless, the Stockton

and Darlington railway soon had a successor in the line between Manchester and Liverpool, whose opening in 1830 was the decisive moment in the history of traffic during the nineteenth century. The complete success of that epoch-marking function was marred by the unfortunate accident which killed Huskisson. But it was no longer possible to doubt that steam traction would supersede all other forms of transport whether of passengers or of goods by land. In this, as in the creation of manufacturing machinery, Great Britain took the lead, which materially assisted in giving her an overwhelming advantage in commercial competition.

## II

### LITERATURE

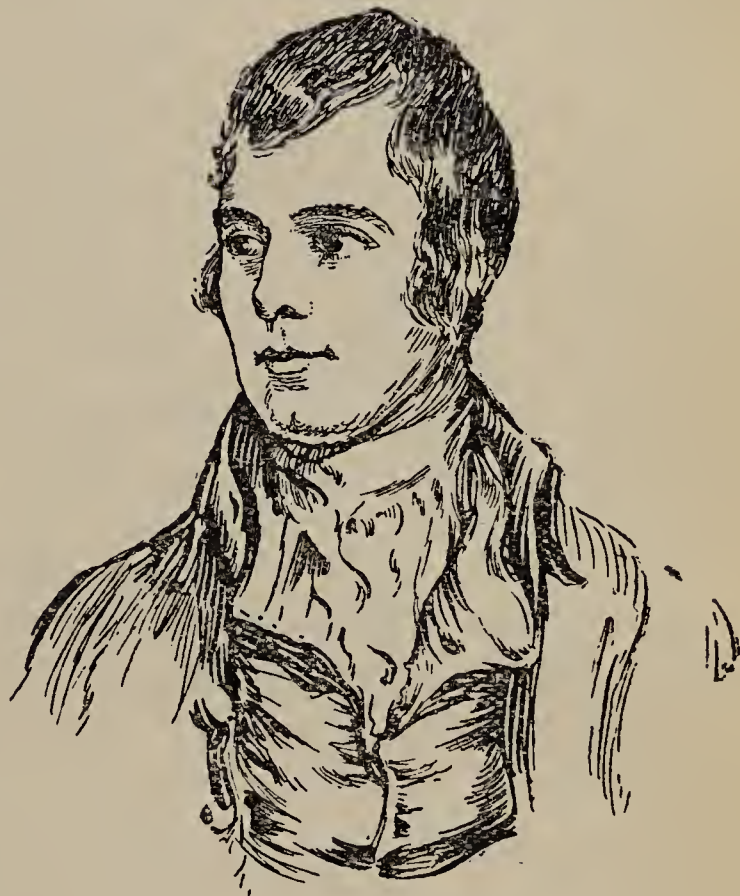
The era of political and social revolution was the era also of a revolution in literature, or at least in poetical literature. The spirit which



gave birth to the French Revolution was one of revolt against conventions which society had come to regard as conditions of orderly existence. The same spirit revolted against the conventions which had made poetry as artificial as society. Poetry in England had been intellectualised, cut off from its emotional basis, severed from passion and from nature, cribbed, cabined, and confined by canons which restricted the subjects with which it was permitted to deal and the language in which it was permitted to express itself. Polite culture, however, had allowed a certain interest in a barbaric and uncultivated past. It had suffered itself to pay a tribute of admiration to the ballad literature collected by Allan Ramsay in Scotland and Bishop Percy in England. It had even indulged in a somewhat uncritical enthusiasm over James Macpherson's *Ossian*, which claimed to be an ancient Celtic Epic, though sceptical readers such as Dr. Johnson entirely declined to endorse its genuineness.

From these explorations into the past came one of the impulses which helped to bring a new poetical literature to birth. A second impulse came from the fact that outside the recognised literary world the lyric in its simplest form, song, had survived as a natural product among the Scottish people ever since the days of William Dunbar and the reign of James IV.; and Scottish song suddenly culminated in the genius of Robert Burns at the moment when England's last literary dictator was removed by the death of Samuel Johnson. In Scotland Burns was the last and the greatest of a long line of singers; to England he appeared as the originator of a new movement. All that was greatest in him completely traversed the recognised literary canons. In the language of his own countryside, not in the language of culture, he expressed the emotions, the passions of his own countryfolk, in verse of that magical rhythm which no art can acquire.

Burns himself was not in conscious rebellion against literary conventions, because those conventions had never been imposed upon him. Nevertheless the new spirit was incarnate in him, hating bondage of any sort for himself or others, often reckless and uncontrolled, but ardent, sincere, and full of a broad and deep human sympathy. Convention stifled him, and when, on occasion, he deliberately fettered the form of his writing, his individual characteristics disappeared and he became commonplace.



Robert Burns.

[From the painting by Nasmyth.]



For the true note of the Revolution was Individuality, and its strength lay in the free development of individual characteristics. The revolutionists were of no school; they pursued the most diverse methods and the most diverse aims. They acted upon irreconcilable theories; they were at one only in their rejection of the methods and theories and aims of the school which had dominated the eighteenth century. They were for the most part men to whom at the outset the French Revolution seemed to open out vistas of unlimited promise, in whom it aroused the passion of humanity and the passion for liberty; both passions are perfectly consistent with the instinct of conservatism, the love of order, an even exaggerated admiration of the past. Many of them became the more conservative when the events in France disappointed their first enthusiastic hopes. Typical conservatives as well as typical revolutionaries were numbered amongst them. But they all agreed in breaking away from the current literary ideals and in asserting their own individuality. Burns was the harbinger of the new day whose dawn was signalled by the publication in 1798 of the *Lyrical Ballads* by Wordsworth and Coleridge, which included Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* and Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*, as well as many other pieces which exemplified a new theory of the poetic art.

Thus was founded the "Lake School," which was not a school at all. It was called a school and looked upon as a school because its members were associated together as friends; and it was called the Lake School because they settled for a time in proximity to each other in the Lake district, which Wordsworth made his permanent home. To realise that in doctrine and practice they were poles asunder, it is sufficient to compare the two masterpieces in the *Lyrical Ballads*. An imagination at once vivid and mystical and a haunting melody of expression were the primary characteristics of Coleridge. Wordsworth was above all else the prophet of Nature, as the expression

"Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky and in the mind of man,"

the poet of

"That blessed mood,  
In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world  
Is lightened."

As unlike to both Wordsworth and Coleridge as to Pope and Johnson was the next star that appeared on the poetical firmament, Walter Scott. Scott was no prophet; he had no gift of spiritual insight; but with him



poetry resumed its function as the medium of the story-teller. Before long he was to desert poetry for prose and to raise the novel to a new place in literature. Scott, in his own eyes, was not at all a rebel against the existing order; he was merely reviving the conventions of the past, appropriating the ballad idea to new conditions. But for all that he in fact preached by his example a return to naturalism, to spontaneity, instead of submission to the canons of orthodoxy.

Upon Scott followed Byron, superficially the most rebellious and fundamentally the most conventional of the whole group; the most conventional, because he did not distinguish between poetry and rhetoric, and the great bulk of his verse is rhymed rhetoric, according therein with the eighteenth-century convention. But he too was insistent upon individuality. Two other great poets belong to this galaxy whose main poetical work was accomplished between 1785 and 1825, though three of them survived that date and Wordsworth's life was prolonged until 1850. These two, Shelley and Keats, again emphasise the wide diversity, the individualism which characterised the new era. Keats may be called the high priest of the religion of Beauty, but if any actual historical personage can be named as the archetype, the supreme expression, of all that is meant by the term "Poet," Shelley was that man.

Poetry was re-born in the revolutionary era, and the nineteenth century learnt to regard it as a matter of course that there should be great poets living in England, regardless of the fact that great poets are not a normal and constant product of any country in the world. But apart from the poetic revival, the most striking literary features of the period were the creation of the Review and the establishment of the Novel as the most influential form of creative literature. The *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* and *Blackwood* provided new media for criticism, and for the literary treatment of politics. When Sir Walter Scott turned from writing stories in verse to writing novels in prose it might almost be said that the novel stepped into the place which had once been occupied in literature by the drama. The literary aspirant came up to London with a novel in his bag instead of a tragedy in his pocket. For a full half century Scott continued to be acknowledged as the supreme master; others took their places beside him perhaps, but superiority was claimed for none. Later generations



Sir Walter Scott.

[After the painting by Raeburn.]



have disputed his claims, but the fact remains that Scott was the master who taught the rest of the world the novelist's craft. George Stephenson's "Rocket" would not have travelled from London to Edinburgh at a speed of seventy miles in an hour, but as George Stephenson was the father of the modern locomotive, Walter Scott was the father of the modern novel.



## BOOK VII

### THE MODERN BRITISH EMPIRE

#### CHAPTER XXXIV

##### THE REFORMED PARLIAMENT

###### I

###### AFTER REFORM

THE more flagrant anomalies of the old Parliamentary system were destroyed by the great Reform Bill in response to a strong national demand. The effect was to put an end to the immense preponderance of political influence hitherto possessed by the landowners and to transfer the balance of power to the manufacturing and trading classes. The working man was still excluded from the franchise, and property, after its first extreme alarm, again began to breathe freely. The concession to the middle classes had in fact set up a new barrier against a wider democratic movement, and although the working classes were angry and dissatisfied, the middle classes in the main held the government of the country in their own hands for six-and-thirty years, during which the old party titles of Whig and Tory were generally displaced by the new labels of Liberal and Conservative.

During most of those years Liberals were in office, and the foreign policy of the Government was controlled by Lord Palmerston, an Irish peer who sat in the House of Commons as the representative of an English constituency. Palmerston stood for the Canning tradition and the Canning interpretation of non-intervention in the affairs of the European States; an interpretation which claimed for Britain the right of intervening to prevent intervention by others, and by no means permitted the voice of Britain to be ignored in the councils of Europe, though she was only once involved in a European war as a consequence. Palmerston also established the second tradition of Victorian foreign policy—of regarding Russian aggression as the great danger to be guarded against, with its corollary of preserving the integrity of the Turkish dominion.

One problem eternally vexed the souls of British statesmen, the problem of persistent discontent and disorder in Ireland, which broke up



more than one ministry and seemed no nearer settlement at the end of the period than at its beginning. A second problem, however, was to be so thoroughly settled that for half a century it practically disappeared from the field of political discussion. This was the question of Free Trade, which may be called the principle of *laissez faire* as applied to commerce. But in those questions which presented themselves as social there was no essential dividing line between parties; although the stronger hold which the *laissez faire* doctrine had taken upon Liberals than upon Conservatives, upon the manufacturing than upon the landed interests, made the latter rather than the former advocates of state intervention.

The general election which followed the Reform Bill brought back to Westminster a Parliament with a considerable Liberal majority. Lord Grey remained at the head of the ministry until the midsummer of 1834, when he and some of his colleagues resigned in connection with the Irish question, and a reconstructed Liberal ministry was led for some months by Lord Melbourne. That ministry was terminated by the last exercise of the king's right to dismiss ministers on his own responsibility. Peel took office, but a general election still gave the Opposition a Parliamentary majority; Peel resigned in April. Melbourne returned to office, and remained at the head of the Government, except for a brief *interregnum* during 1839, until 1841. In that year he was displaced by a Conservative administration under Sir Robert Peel, who at the end of 1845 broke up his party by proposing the repeal of the Corn Law, which was carried in the following year. Peel resigned, his Government having been defeated on an Irish question, and the Liberals, by whose aid the Corn Bill had been carried, returned to power under the leadership of Lord John Russell. Practically, therefore, during the twenty years which followed the Reform Bill Liberals were in office except during the five years of Peel's administration, and the most prominent feature of that administration was the gradual adoption by the Premier of a policy to which the bulk of his own party was opposed while its principles were in favour with the Liberals.

In the fifth year of the reformed Parliament there occurred an event of primary importance in the development of the British constitutional system. William IV. died, and was succeeded on the throne by a girl of eighteen. William had played his own part, it may be said, successfully, without attempting to exercise questionable constitutional influence, however strong his personal feelings might be. He was indubitably within his constitutional rights in his effort to avoid a creation of peers and in his dismissal of Melbourne's ministry; but it was a very grave question whether his successor would follow his example. Failing the young princess, the next heir to the throne was the Duke of Cumberland, notoriously a reactionary of a dangerous type, whose accession might have led to a repetition of 1688. But the young princess who succeeded to the throne had been trained to a very high sense of duty; she became at once the



political pupil of Lord Melbourne, who taught her the ideals of a constitutional monarch, and she was happy in marrying a German prince whose sense of duty was as high as her own, and who proved himself capable of learning to grasp constitutional conceptions remote enough from those known to any German court. A sentiment of chivalrous kindness toward a young girl placed in a very difficult position revived the latent loyalty of her people, which was fostered and developed by her own admirable character and conduct. And this girl was destined to reign for sixty-four years, during which the principles of British constitutionalism became too firmly established to be easily shaken whether by revolutionists or by reactionaries.

Another point, however, must be noted in connection with the accession of the queen to the throne. In Hanover, which, after 1815, had been erected into a kingdom instead of an electorate, there was a male succession, and the crown of Hanover on William's death passed not to the new queen but to the dead king's brother, the Duke of Cumberland. So ended the political link between Britain and Hanover, and British interests were no longer involved in essentially German problems as they had inevitably been during the period of the Union.

## II

### GREY AND MELBOURNE

Apart from Ireland Lord Grey's ministry found itself faced with the need for a considerable amount of legislation. The charter of the East India Company required renewal and modification; in 1833 the company was allowed to retain its political position, but was at last deprived of the old trading monopoly which it had hitherto retained as concerned China. But the great questions of which Parliament undertook the handling were of the social and humanitarian type. Grey's Government carried the Act for the Abolition of Slavery and what is commonly called the First Factory Act; and it introduced the Poor Law Amendment Act, which was carried by Melbourne's ministry after Grey's own retirement.

Of the first two measures it may be said that the public conscience recognised their necessity, though it made no very clamorous demand for them. As to the third, Poor Law Reform, every one knew that it was needed, but it was one of those subjects which no Government could take up without the certainty of diminishing its own popularity. The Reformed Parliament did not always take the course which appeared best after the event, but it was eminently conscientious and faced its problems with a sincere desire to achieve what was best for the public good.

The question of slavery was one which had long agitated the minds of Englishmen. In the last century it had been laid down by Lord Mansfield



that no one on the soil of these islands was a slave. By long and determined battling Wilberforce and his associates had at last driven home to the public conscience the iniquities of the slave trade and procured its prohibition. Great Britain had honourably distinguished itself by the zeal with which in 1815 it had urged the rest of the European Powers to follow its example. But the abolition of the slave trade did not carry with it the abolition of slavery; in the West Indies and in South Africa black slaves were extensively employed in the plantations and farms. Nearly all the hard labour was slave labour, and the slaves were valuable property. It was impossible to abolish slavery, an institution sanctioned by the state for two hundred years, without compensating the slave-owners. Nor could so vast a disorganisation of the existing system of labour be carried through at a blow without disastrous results. There were absolutely no interests served besides those of the slaves themselves by abolition, except on the theory that free labour for wages would in the long run turn out more economical than forced, a doctrine which did not readily appeal to those who owned the slaves and would have to pay the wages. Nevertheless, British public opinion completely endorsed the Act, which set a term to the time during which service was to remain compulsory, declared that there was thenceforth no property in the persons of slaves, and provided out of British pockets twenty millions sterling to compensate the owners, the largest sum that has ever been raised for a purely humanitarian object without any possibility of a financial return. Huge as the sum was, it by no means satisfied the slave-owners, especially among the Dutch in South Africa, who set an immensely higher value upon their slaves as property than the sum allotted to them by the British Government.

The demand for a Factory Act was also purely humanitarian in origin, and was viewed with extreme disfavour by many manufacturers and many also of the workmen. The development of factories during the last fifty years, accompanied by the Poor Law System, had brought about an immense amount of employment of children almost from the moment when they could walk and talk. In the depressed condition of labour the working-class parents saw only that the children brought grist to the family mill; they did not see that the cheap child labour diminished the employment and the wages of adults, besides utterly ruining the health, mental and moral as well as physical, of the children. And if the parents of working-class children were callous, so also were the administrators of the Poor Law who were responsible for the workhouse waifs. As a rule the main desire of the parish was to get the children off its hands, and to be free of the expense of maintaining them at the earliest possible moment.

Almost fifty years before, the Manchester magistrates and the Manchester doctors were already awake to the evils for which the factory system was even at that early stage beginning to be responsible. But their powers enabled them to do nothing more than to interfere with apprenticeship in the old standing trades scheduled in the old Statute of Apprentices, which in



effect hardly touched the factories. At the same time the Manchester Committees gave full credit to the many cotton mills whose proprietors were careful to observe regulations of their own for preserving the health of the children in their employment. It may here be remarked that Robert Owen in his mills at New Lanark worked on the most enlightened principles, paying good wages and providing for the education of the workmen's children without putting them to any employment.

As early as 1802 Sir Robert Peel the elder, the father of the famous statesman, had procured an Act which to a very slight extent improved the working conditions for apprentices in cotton and woollen factories. Some further infinitesimal restrictions were imposed in 1819 and 1825, but the manufacturers in general were already up in arms against breaches of the doctrine of *laissez faire*, and interference with them in the management of their own business. Still there were other manufacturers who were philanthropically anxious to procure better conditions for the children, but could not venture to go far on their own account, fearing that they would be too seriously handicapped in the competition with their less scrupulous neighbours. State regulation which imposed the same conditions on all would secure them against that handicap, and would insist upon no restrictions which they themselves would regard as objectionable.



Lord Shaftesbury.  
[From the portrait by Millais.]

The more vigorous movement was started in 1832 by Michael Sadler, with the proposal that the labour of children should be restricted to ten hours per diem. His place as the champion of philanthropic legislation was taken in the Reformed Parliament by Lord Ashley, better known to posterity by his later title as Lord Shaftesbury. Grey's Government, however, chose to make itself responsible for an official measure—taking the place of Ashley's bill—which not only created regulations and imposed pains and penalties, but appointed government inspectors to see that the law was carried out. The bill, which bears the name of Lord Althorp, forbade in textile factories the employment of children under nine, of children under thirteen for more than nine hours, and of young persons under eighteen for more than twelve hours. It is to be remarked that the employers as a whole did not oppose the Factory Act. There were among them the bad employers, who deliberately desired to exploit the labour of children for their own profit, regardless of the cost to the children. There were those who were possessed with a *doctrinaire* view that all state interference is a check on the natural course of trade, and therefore in



the end does more harm than good. But in England the passionate devotees of abstract doctrines are rare. The employers themselves originated the proposal for state inspection, because they wanted to be secure that, if regulations were made, they would be enforced upon every one instead of being left to be carried out by the conscientious and ignored by the unscrupulous. There were, indeed, not a few of them who already went as far as the new law demanded, and to them it was entirely satisfactory that their neighbours should be compelled to follow suit.

The third great measure dealt with the amendment of the Poor Law. The Elizabethan Poor Law in effect served its purpose in a fairly satisfactory manner for a century and three-quarters with very little modification; but unemployment and the relief of destitution entered upon a new phase about the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Gilbert's Act was introduced to meet the new conditions, but in its practical application by magistrates it met them by virtually upsetting the principles on which the Poor Law was based. The old law gave relief only to those who were incapable of work, or who, being without employment, entered the workhouse and did the work which was provided for them. But the benevolent magistrates under Gilbert's Act provided relief as well for every able-bodied labourer who was earning an insufficient wage, and thereby unintentionally encouraged the payment of insufficient wages by the agricultural employer, while they destroyed the labourer's incentive to earn higher wages by better work, and encouraged him to enlarge his family without any regard to his own capacity for supporting his children by his own efforts.

The Poor Law Amendment Act, which was passed in 1834 after Lord Grey's resignation, abolished the relief which supplemented wages, and reinstated the workhouse test; that is, it gave relief only to those who entered the workhouse. At the same time it organised the combination of parishes into Unions, which at once made their management more efficient and more economical. It compelled the able-bodied labourer to earn by his own work the maintenance of himself and his family instead of depending upon extraneous relief, and as a consequence it forced the agricultural employer to pay the living wage which the labourer was forced to demand. But at the outset the only apparent benefit was the substantial one of greatly diminished rates. Wages did not immediately adjust themselves to the new conditions, and the labourer starved. The farmer, paying increased though still insufficient wages, did not feel the reduction in the rates as adequate compensation. To the needy the workhouse conditions were deliberately made as unattractive as possible, lest they should offer an inducement to "come on the parish"; and since no one sought relief who could possibly help it, to do so carried with it a stigma which often acted as a preventive precisely in the cases where relief was most needed and most deserved. In the long run the new Poor Law materially improved the position and conditions of the agricultural labourer; but in the beginning, during the process of readjustment, his lot was worsened. The



authors of the Act cast their bread upon the waters, and their immediate reward was of the usual kind in such circumstances.

The Poor Law Amendment Bill had already passed through several stages in Parliament when Lord Grey's ministry was broken up by differences upon Irish questions. The reconstruction was entrusted to Lord Melbourne, with a vain hope on the king's part that he would combine with Peel and Wellington. This project however was impracticable, and the new administration was as definitely Whig or Liberal as the last. King William, on the other hand, was waiting anxiously for an opportunity to bring in the Conservatives. Lord Althorp, who commanded an extraordinary degree of confidence in the House of Commons among all sections of Liberals, was transferred to the House of Lords, when he became Earl Spencer in succession to his father in November.

This event appeared so to weaken the party, or at least the Cabinet, that William felt justified in dismissing the ministry and calling upon Wellington and Peel to form a government. He undoubtedly thought that the country, like himself, wished to be rid of the Liberals, especially in view of the great outcry against the Poor Law Amendment Act and the present sufferings which that Act entailed. The dismissal of the Liberals made an appeal to the constituencies an obvious necessity, since in the Parliament which had begun its sessions in 1833 the Conservatives could not hope to command a majority. Peel announced his principles, of what was called Liberal Conservatism, in the "Tamworth Manifesto." At the general election the Conservatives were returned in considerably larger numbers than before; the curious may observe with some interest that there were two hundred and seventy of them, forming a minority larger perhaps than any other single group, but unable to resist a combination of orthodox Liberals, advanced Radicals, and Irish Repealers—a position singularly like that of the Unionists in 1910. They hoped, however, for support from a considerable number of the Conservative wing of the Liberals, so that for a while they attempted to carry on the government. But when the Liberals struck an unofficial compact with O'Connell, Peel's administration was doomed; and in April 1835 Melbourne returned to power with most of his old colleagues in the Cabinet.

The principal measure for which the new Government was responsible before the death of the old king was the Municipal Reform Act, a natural corollary of the Parliamentary Reform Bill. The old municipal government was in a state of chaos, and the new Act established a uniform system under which the governing body, the Council of the borough, was elected triennially by the rate-payers, and the mayor and aldermen were elected by the Council.

Of the permanent influences brought to bear upon the British constitution with the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837 we have already spoken; in the immediate problems of government it made no difference. The general election which followed very shortly kept the ministry with a



substantial if somewhat uncertain majority; and in the next four years Melbourne did good service to the country by the admirable manner in which he educated the young queen in the duties and responsibilities of her position. But a period of legislative stagnation followed upon the activity of the last four years. Distress and its usual accompaniment, discontent, were painfully prevalent, but no remedies were forthcoming from Parliament, which was satisfied that political reform had gone far enough. Two outside agitations however were now set on foot. The



Queen Victoria in 1837.

[From a painting by W. C. Ross.]

Anti-Corn-Law League fixed upon the high price of corn as the fundamental cause of the general distress, and in 1838 began its active propaganda for the abolition of the corn duties—a propaganda as little agreeable to Melbourne as to Peel and Wellington. But the originators of the League and its most vigorous advocates were of the manufacturer class; and while most of them were actuated by the sincere belief that the working classes would derive immense advantage from the reduction in the price of food, it was easy also to point out that the manufacturers anticipated benefits for themselves, since they would be able to pay a lower money wage when less money would buy more food. Among the working men themselves there were not a few who viewed the agitation with suspicion, believing that its real object was the curtailment of wages. They mistrusted gifts from the class whom they regarded as their natural enemies; moreover, they saw in the movement an insidious attempt to distract their energies from the per-

sistent pursuit of political power which was their own panacea for the depression of the working classes.

Therefore from them arose the second agitation whose objects were formulated in the series of six demands known as the People's Charter, the advocates of which became known in 1839 as Chartists. The demands which appeared so revolutionary in those days scarcely seem alarming now. Abolition of the property qualification for members of Parliament, payment of members, and the ballot were three of the points, all of which have since been conceded. Manhood suffrage is not far removed from the official proposals of the Government in 1912; and the objection to equal electoral districts rests more upon their impracticability than upon abstract conservatism. The sixth demand, for annual Parliaments, is the only one which finds no advocates among responsible politicians who are not looked



upon as extremists. But seventy years ago every one of the six points was regarded as revolutionary—by enthusiastic advocates as a straight road to the millennium, and by respectable but timorous persons at large as a straight road to anarchy. So the Government would have nothing to say either to Chartists or to Anti-Corn-Law Leaguers. The refusal of Parliament in 1839 to receive a huge Chartist petition was followed by several violent outbreaks which were sharply repressed, and the vigour of the agitation died down for the moment.

The Anti-Corn-Law League had little more success than the Chartist movement with the Government, whose financial difficulties nevertheless induced them in 1841 to make another movement in the direction of Free Trade. Disciples of Adam Smith could cite plenty of instances in the past of an increased revenue following upon a diminution of duties upon imported goods, due to the increased demand. The Government now proposed to lower the very heavy tax upon foreign imported sugar, and to establish a fixed duty of eight shillings on foreign corn in place of the existing sliding scale. But the budget was defeated by a substantial majority, and the defeat was followed by a resolution of "no confidence," which was carried by one vote. Parliament was dissolved, and the general election gave a strong majority to the party led in the House of Commons by Sir Robert Peel. Melbourne resigned and Peel became Prime Minister.

In 1839 there had arisen a curious domestic crisis which caused intense excitement at the time. The Government through these years was in a constant minority in the Lords, while its majority in the Commons was sufficiently insecure to warrant the Upper Chamber in an active opposition. After narrowly escaping defeat in the Commons on a colonial question, Lord Melbourne resigned and advised the queen to send for Sir Robert Peel. Peel undertook to construct a ministry; but he pointed out to the young queen that the ladies of the bedchamber who had been selected by Lord Melbourne belonged to the Whig families, and surrounded their mistress with an atmosphere which would prevent her working cordially with a ministry formed from the Conservative party; he therefore made the dismissal of certain of these ladies a condition of his taking office. The queen claimed that the appointment of the ladies was a personal not a political matter, and entirely declined to dismiss them. The question was one which could only arise when a queen occupied the throne. Both the monarch and the statesman stood firm, and consequently Lord Melbourne returned to office, considering that the queen's position was constitutionally sound, and that in the circumstances it would be an act of desertion to refuse her his services. It was very shortly after this event that the queen married her cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha—one of those unions rare enough in royal families in which both parties were lovers from the beginning and remained lovers to the end of their lives.

Probably the most popular feature of the Melbourne administration was its foreign policy as conducted by Lord Palmerston. That minister



acted very much as if he were an autocrat in whose doings his colleagues had no voice. His audacity might cause nervousness, but at least there was no fear that Britain would be ignored in the councils of Europe. It was from this time that suspicion of Russia and antagonism to her became prominent features of British policy. Like Canning before him, Palmerston was bent on preventing Russia from either acquiring Turkish territory or exercising a predominant influence at Constantinople. More than this, he succeeded in pushing his own country to the front as the champion of the integrity of the Turkish Empire, drawing France and Austria in his train, but keeping the leading position for himself. The notable stroke was effected in 1840. Mehemet Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, was evidently seeking to establish an independent sovereignty over Syria as well as Egypt, and his ambitions probably went considerably further. It was Palmerston's object to make the repression of Mehemet Ali an act of the European Powers in general, not merely of Russia. He succeeded in bringing about a concert of the Powers sufficient for his own purposes, while in effect it enabled him to accomplish the defeat of the Pasha by means mainly of British ships and men without effective participation either by Russia or by France; and Turkey began to learn to look upon Britain as her protector. The anti-Russian policy had also at this time begun to play a serious part in India; but with this as also with important events in the colonies we shall deal separately.

### III

#### PEEL

The ministry formed by Sir Robert Peel in September 1841 was more Liberal in its elements than the Conservative party in Parliament; for the Duke of Wellington, who joined the Cabinet without taking office, was fully alive to the necessity for making concessions which he regarded as being in themselves undesirable. Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham had both been in the past associated with Melbourne. A minor office was found for Gladstone, a young man for whom a brilliant future was anticipated; but Benjamin Disraeli, in spite of the remarkable talents which he had already displayed, was too little trusted, consequently he nursed a grudge against Peel for refusing him the advancement to which he considered himself entitled. The bedchamber question, it should be remarked, was not revived. By the advice of Lord Melbourne the queen had already deprived her household of its partisan aspect by admitting some Opposition ladies, and it was not possible to assert the claim that ladies should be changed with changing ministries.

Peel had obtained a majority in the country not so much on the ground of positive objections to the Government policy as because ministers



had recently given a general impression of feebleness and incompetence, of endeavouring to face their difficulties by mere makeshifts. When Parliament met at the beginning of 1842 the new ministers had plenty of problems to solve. Chartism was again becoming active, trade was depressed, want was widespread, Ireland was disturbed, rumours of disaster had come from India. The country at least hoped that the financial ability with which Peel was credited would find some solution for the existing problems, so far, at least, as they sprang from economic causes. He was hardly committed to anything more than the maintenance of the principle of the sliding scale, as against the fixed duty on corn proposed by the Liberals. His first budget was, therefore, awaited with no little anxiety.

A very large amount of Peel's support inside and outside the House came from the landed interest, which was extremely averse from any tampering with the Corn Laws, which in their eyes gave too little rather than too much protection to the agricultural body on whose prosperity that of the nation depended. On the other hand, among the manufacturing class especially, the Anti-Corn-Law League had been developing the conviction that the high price of corn was the root cause of the general distress. Peel dealt with the Corn Law by providing a new sliding scale, of which the primary object was to prevent violent fluctuations of price while ensuring a tolerably remunerative minimum. With corn at fifty shillings a quarter or less there was to be a twenty shilling duty on the foreign import. With corn at seventy-five shillings or more there was to be no duty. Between these two points there was to be a graduated reduction of duty as the price rose. A preference was also given, in the form of lower duties, to colonial as against foreign corn. Amendments on the one side in favour of abolishing the duty, and of making it more stringent on the other, were defeated by overwhelming majorities, and the official Liberal amendment in favour of a fixed duty fared not very much better. But there were some who believed that Peel already in the bottom of his heart was a convert to the views of the League, though he was still trying to persuade himself that his convictions were unchanged.

The new sliding scale at any rate shelved the Corn Law question for a time. But the problem of providing public revenue was serious. Year after year the Liberal budgets had ended in deficits, which had not been removed by attempts to enlarge the revenue either by the increase or by the diminution of duties. Some fresh source of taxation must be found or some old source again called into play. In this fateful year Peel revived the Income Tax, which Pitt had introduced for the purpose of the great war, but which had been swept aside, as justified only by war, soon after the peace. Peel himself regarded it now only as an emergency tax which would cease to be necessary when trade revived. He anticipated its disappearance in five years' time. Many Chancellors of the Exchequer have indulged in similar anticipations and all have been doomed to a similar



disappointment. Not till the twentieth century did it come to be recognised in form as well as in fact as a permanent source of revenue, though it has never been remitted since 1842.

One purpose of the income tax was to tide over a period during which the revenue was to suffer immediate loss for the sake of future gain by the reduction of duties on imports. Out of twelve hundred articles on which a duty was at this time levied nearly two-thirds were to have the existing duty reduced; it was expected that after three years the return to the revenue would become greater instead of smaller, but that in the meanwhile the loss would amount to not much less than the receipts from the income tax, which was fixed at 7d. in the pound. The sugar duty was retained unaltered. The Opposition were able to point to the inconsistency of reducing a very large number of taxes for the benefit of the consumer with very little regard to the producer's interest, coupled with the retention of the heavy taxes on corn and sugar, which put money into the pockets of the landed interest, on whose political support the Government depended, and of the wealthy planters whose influence was of great value to them. There was also not a little grumbling on the part of the home producer of goods on which the duties were reduced. Peel, however, was strong enough to override the opposition both of opponents of the Corn Law and of the advocates of higher protective tariffs.

The next budget of importance came three years later in 1845. Meanwhile, apart from Ireland, which was a constant thorn in the side of every government, Chartism and legislation with regard to labour had again compelled attention. In 1842 the second great Chartist petition was presented demanding the "six points" and protesting against what it described as "class legislation." It was evident enough that the petitioners expected by the acquisition of political power, through the six points of the Charter, to be able to subvert the existing order of society in the supposed interests of the working class; and it was this expectation on their part which more than anything else inspired in the dominant classes a dread of any extension of popular power. As before, the House refused to give the petitioners a hearing. The result was that later in the same year there were serious Chartist riots which necessitated the intervention of the military; but the Government measures were effective, and the Chartists themselves became more and more definitely divided into Physical Force men and Moral Force men who relied upon constitutional agitation in preference to the methods of violence.

Althorp's Factory Act had been directed exclusively to the protection of children in textile factories. Now public sentiment was horrified by the report of a commission on the conditions of labour in the coalfields. An appalling state of things was revealed, in which large numbers of women were engaged in hard underground labour for which they were totally unfitted, and which could not but be ruinous not only to their own health, but to the physique of the next generation. No less intolerable was the



very extensive employment of quite young children in similar occupations, which to the present generation would be simply inconceivable. So intense was the public feeling aroused that, when Lord Ashley introduced his Collieries Bill to exclude all females and all boys under thirteen from underground work, it was carried in the House of Commons without a division.

The Act for the first time brought women as well as children within the scope of legislation. Arguments for the protection of children, it was seen, applied in principle to the protection of women. They were not free agents, and could make no terms for themselves. The question of their treatment affected not only themselves but that of the physical and mental degeneration of the race. Accordingly, after two abortive attempts a new amending Factory Act was passed in 1844, which reduced the working hours of children to half-time in a day of fifteen hours in factories, and restricted to twelve the working hours of women as well as of young persons.

The budget of 1845 showed a marked advance in the direction of Free Trade, of which there had been some warning in the previous year. Export duties were to be abolished, as well as duties on the import of four hundred and thirty articles of raw material. The very considerable gain to the manufacturing interest did not make

the budget satisfactory to the high Protectionists, and Disraeli denounced the Government as an "organised hypocrisy"; but the support which Peel lost from his own party he recovered from members of the Opposition, and the budget was carried by large majorities. At the same time a breach between the minister and many of his Conservative followers was widened by his Irish policy; and Ireland was now to be the decisive factor first in determining his complete conversion to the doctrines of the Anti-Corn-Law League and then in putting an end to his administration.

A tremendous visitation of the potato blight entirely ruined the potato crop in Ireland, and brought not merely destitution but starvation in its train. In November Peel proposed to his Cabinet the suspension, which every one knew must mean the abolition, of the duties on imported corn, since the provision of cheap food had become an absolute necessity. At



Sir Robert Peel moving the repeal of the Corn Laws, January 1846.

[From a sketch made in the House of Commons.]



first only three of his colleagues supported his views ; by the end of the month Wellington and some other members of the Cabinet were prepared to side with Peel ; and in the meanwhile Lord John Russell, who was now the recognised leader of the Opposition, publicly announced his own conversion, and his advocacy of the total abolition of the Corn Laws in preference to the fixed duty to which his party had hitherto clung.

But a section of the Cabinet was obdurate. Peel in the circumstances hesitated to introduce a measure which involved an entire reversal of the principles he had maintained when he took office. The thing should be done by the Opposition, though with the support of himself and his followers. He resigned, but Russell failed to form a ministry. Peel resumed office with a Free Trade programme and with an opposition to that programme which was now confined to the extreme Protectionists, led nominally by Lord George Bentinck but in fact by Benjamin Disraeli. The duties on very nearly all raw materials were to be abolished, as well as on sundry articles of manufacture. On many others they were to be largely reduced. The corn duties were to disappear in three years' time except for a fixed registration charge of one shilling. In the interval, to soften the blow to the agricultural interest, there was to be a low sliding scale ranging from ten shillings when wheat was at forty-eight shillings a quarter or less to four shillings when it was at fifty-four shillings or more. In May the Corn Bill passed its third reading in the House of Commons ; the Lords followed the lead of the Duke of Wellington and passed the third reading on June 25th.

But on the same day a Coercion Bill for Ireland was defeated in the House of Commons by a combination of Liberals who were opposed to the bill in principle and Protectionists who had clamoured for it but were determined to wreck the administration. They succeeded. But the Corn Bill received the royal assent ; Peel's task was done ; he resigned, and Lord John Russell accepted the task of forming a ministry.

#### IV

#### AFTER PEEL

Lord John Russell's ministry was not fruitful of legislation. The Liberals were in a minority in the House of Commons and were in effect dependent upon the support of the Peelites, the members of the Conservative party who had followed their chief in becoming Free Traders. A general election during 1847 strengthened the party, but still left it without an actual majority. At the outset the domestic interests were absorbed by Ireland, where the potato blight reappeared with even increased virulence ; and the Government was very much hampered first by its efforts to provide



relief and then by the disturbances which followed upon the extreme distress.

The most notable legislative measure for England was the Factory Act which bears the name of Fielden, the outcome of the dissatisfaction left behind by the Factory Act of the last ministry. Its leading feature was the introduction of what was called the ten hours' day. The meaning of this was that the legal day as opposed to the night became the period of twelve hours from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. Only between those hours therefore was the employment of women and young persons permitted, night work being prohibited. As it was required that two hours should be allowed for meal times, their actual working day became one of ten hours. In form, it was no part of the purpose of legislation to control the hours of adult male labour; but the practical effect was that the men's hours had to be adapted to the altered arrangements for women, and in effect the Act secured a ten hours' day for men. There was much vehement opposition at the time, accompanied by elaborate demonstrations that if the hours of work were reduced profits would vanish.



Lord John Russell.  
[From the drawing by Maclise.]

The event proved that the demonstrations were fallacious, because it was very soon found that with the shorter hours the work was more efficient and the output of the ten hours was worth at least as much as the output of the longer period.

In 1848 the unrest of peoples and nationalities on the European Continent broke out in a series of revolutions or insurrections, initiated by the deposition of Louis Philippe in France and the proclamation of a republic in that country. In Germany the risings were popular, in Italy and throughout the heterogeneous Austrian Empire they were nationalist. But in these islands there was only a very mild reflex of the disturbances which agitated Europe—a singularly futile insurrection in Ireland and in England an equally futile demonstration on the part of the Chartists, which proved to be the death-blow of the movement.

Inspired by the bloodless but effective revolution in France, the more extreme among the Chartist leaders started a clamorous agitation throughout the country. Violent speeches were made, with some talk of the establishment of a republic. A monster meeting was to be held at Kennington Common on April 10th, when a monster procession was to carry a monster petition to the House of Commons. The alarm in London was extreme, but prompt measures were taken to establish security. A huge number of



special constables were enrolled, among whom was included the French exile Louis Napoleon, the nephew of the great Emperor. Under the direction of the Duke of Wellington London was thoroughly but not too ostentatiously prepared to deal with a desperate insurrection. The Chartist leaders were warned that their procession would not be permitted to pass the Thames. The monster meeting mustered only some thirty thousand, the leaders took to heart the polite but emphatic warnings they received, the procession did not march into London, and the petition was conveyed



The Monster Chartist Meeting on Kennington Common, April 10, 1848.

[From a print in the "Illustrated London News" of 1848 made after a daguerrotype.]

to the House in a cab. Inspection proved that an enormous proportion of the two million signatures were fictitious, and the terrifying spectre of Chartism as a revolutionary movement collapsed amid derision into utter insignificance.

The only other domestic event of political importance which needs to be recorded here was the death of Sir Robert Peel in 1850. His career had been unique, though that of his disciple Gladstone offers some resemblances. Born a Tory, a ministerialist in the days when the reaction was predominant, he passed his whole political life in gradually shedding his original political assumptions and adopting views to which he had once been antagonistic. Every definite measure with which his name is associ-



ated was one which had been advocated by his opponents ; to nearly every one he had himself long offered convinced opposition, from Catholic Emancipation to the abolition of the Corn Law. Each of those measures he carried when at the head or almost at the head of a Government representing a party which only accepted them with extreme reluctance ; but in every case he acted upon the clear conviction that the measure, whether popular or not, had become a necessity of state. Few men have the courage openly to declare themselves converts to views of which they have been open and prominent opponents. That rare courage Peel possessed ; and though in his own day it subjected him to sneers and jibes, to bitter criticism, and to the vitriolic denunciations of Disraeli, the master of bitter speech, in the hour of his death there was none who doubted that he had acted throughout with absolute sincerity of conviction, with a majestic disregard of his own interest and his own popularity, and with a single eye to the public good.

The Russell Government survived for eighteen months after Peel's death. Its end was hastened by the compulsory retirement of Lord Palmerston from the Foreign Office, where his autocratic disregard of the right of his sovereign and his colleagues to information and consultation on high matters of policy at last became intolerable both to the colleagues and to the sovereign. He got his revenge—"Tit for tat with Johnny Russell," as he said—a couple of months later by helping the Opposition to defeat the Government on a bill for constituting a militia. Lord Derby, formerly known in the House of Commons as Lord Stanley, accepted office as leader of the Conservative party, with Disraeli as his Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader in the House of Commons ; though the old Conservatives were still very far from trusting the man whom most of them regarded as an adventurer, though one who had rendered great services to the party and was conspicuously, beyond all comparison, its cleverest member.

The independence of Lord Palmerston at the Foreign Office, even in the last Liberal administration, had been a constant source of friction in the Cabinets. While always maintaining the Canningite position that each European state should be left to settle its own domestic affairs without the application of compulsion by other states, he had no compunction about tendering unasked advice which often aroused irritation in foreign chancelleries. But if his activities seemed meddlesome and, on some occasions, dangerous, his buoyant assumption that Great Britain was entitled to express her own opinions with entire freedom and was quite capable of backing them by force of arms if she thought fit to do so was not unpopular. His self-assertiveness was the cause of Russell's failure to form a Liberal government at the end of 1845, since Lord Grey refused to join the Cabinet if Palmerston went to the Foreign Office. In 1846, however, Lord Grey withdrew his objection. The European convulsion of 1848 again gave Palmerston scope for his activities ; the sympathies of Britain with



the popular and nationalist movements were vigorously expressed, though without much actual influence on the course of events; and England became an asylum for many refugees from despotic governments and for revolutionary propagandists, while the monarchical governments were extremely indignant, because in their eyes Palmerston was fostering anarchy and revolution in their dominions.

In 1849 he was hotly attacked in Parliament both by the non-interventionists, who protested against his meddlesome policy, and by the Radical sympathisers with the revolutionary movements, who were of opinion that British intervention ought to have been carried much further. Palmerston, however, successfully vindicated his position on the ground that on the one hand it was the imperative duty of Britain to express her opinions emphatically and forcibly, but that on the other hand it was not her business to embark on hostilities in order to give those opinions effect. The attack, however, was renewed when Palmerston sent a British fleet to the Piræus to coerce the Greek government in connection with what was known as the Don Pacifico incident. The house of Don Pacifico, a British subject resident in Greece, had been sacked by a mob; there were other claims of British subjects against the Greek government which it persistently ignored. There was an unfortunate misunderstanding with France, which had endeavoured to mediate. Again Palmerston was attacked for the high-handed methods which he had adopted. Nevertheless, he again vindicated himself in a speech which won the warm admiration even of those who, like Sir Robert Peel, disapproved of his action. It was not his policy but his personal independence which caused his dismissal.

Shortly after the great debate just referred to, Lord Palmerston's interference on his own responsibility in the extremely complicated German question of Schleswig-Holstein, on lines which were by no means pleasing either to her Majesty or to the Prince Consort, caused the queen to send a memorandum to the Prime Minister protesting against the Foreign Secretary's arbitrary methods, and requiring that he should give distinct information to her as to his proposed action in any given case, and that when that action had been sanctioned it should not be modified without her knowledge. Palmerston formally accepted the rebuke, but made little alteration in his practice; and before the end of 1851 he sent despatches and instructions in connection with the *coup d'état* by which Louis Napoleon had just seized the supreme power in France, without informing either the queen or his colleagues. It was this which caused the queen and Lord John Russell to insist upon his resignation.

The newly formed ministry of Lord Derby held office only on sufferance; the Peelites refused to join them as they had refused to join the Liberals; and it was only by conciliating Peelites and moderate Liberals that the Government could remain in being. There was therefore no possibility of a return to Protection. The situation was not effectively changed by a slight increase in the numbers of the party at a general



election ; and although Disraeli pledged himself to the maintenance of Free Trade, the Government was defeated on its financial proposals. Lord Derby resigned, and a coalition was formed between the Liberals and the Peelites, with the Peelite Lord Aberdeen as the head of the ministry, in the last week of 1851.

A few weeks before, the old Duke of Wellington had passed away. A strong man whom his soldiers had trusted utterly but never loved, a statesman who might have been a great emperor but was wholly unfitted for party politics, a public servant who set his duty to the Crown and to the state above all other considerations, the Duke was in the ordinary sense of the term a political failure ; but his failure was more honourable than most other men's success. In his later years he won a popular esteem and even affection which had been denied him in his day of triumph. In the hour of his death all men of all parties united to honour and to mourn for the Great Duke as they had honoured and mourned for no other since the death of Chatham.

## V

## IRELAND

The long-deferred measure of Catholic Emancipation, while it remedied a very serious grievance, failed to bring peace to Ireland or adequately to solve the religious problem in that country. The preservation of the established Anglican Church had been an express part of the Treaty of Union, but the maintenance of the Church depended upon tithes which were paid by the occupants of the soil of whom the vast majority were Roman Catholics. To them, therefore, at least, it appeared a monstrous injustice that they should be compelled to contribute to the support of a Church to which they did not belong, while the Church to which they did belong was unsupported. Daniel O'Connell, the "Liberator," had as a very young man begun his public career as an opponent of the Union ; and when Catholic Emancipation had been won, mainly it might be said by the skill with which he had conducted the agitation in its favour, it was not long before he placed the Repeal of the Union in the forefront of his demands for Ireland.

But Repeal was forced into the background again by the much more acute agitation which developed into what was called the tithe war, the resistance of the peasantry to the payment of the obnoxious burden. That resistance, which in itself was obviously and manifestly justified in the eyes of one political school, had in the eyes of another "no semblance of justification in law or reason," and it was accompanied by all the familiar forms of outrage and violence, the persistent refusal of witnesses to give evidence, and the persistent refusal of juries to convict upon any evidence.



Lord Grey's Government, fronted by the usual dilemma, introduced one of those vigorous repressive measures which came to be known as Coercion Bills, which was successful enough in its immediate effect; but it was followed by the remedial proposals for the commutation of tithe into a charge not upon the occupants of the soil but upon the landowners, a redistribution of the funds appropriated to the Irish Church, and the appropriation of the surplus to educational purposes irrespective of creed. This proposal, in conjunction with that for the renewal of the Coercion Act, broke up the Grey Cabinet, and led to the formation of the first Melbourne ministry, which was in its turn displaced after a brief interval by that of Peel and Wellington.

Peel introduced a bill for the commutation of tithes, but the bill was defeated because it rejected the principle of appropriation. The Melbourne ministry returned to power, but its appropriation clause was rejected by the House of Lords; so in 1838 the Liberals accepted the situation and passed the bill for simple commutation. When the tax was no longer exacted from the tenants themselves but from the landlords it ceased to be felt as a pressing grievance.

The return of Melbourne was accompanied by that compact or understanding with O'Connell which was fiercely denounced by the Opposition, but had at least for the time being an undeniably pacificatory effect. The Liberator suspended his demand for repeal. Nevertheless the third or agrarian grievance, the antagonism between landlords and tenants, again rose into painful prominence. On the one side many landlords, often with excellent excuse from the economic point of view, evicted large numbers of tenants in order to put in their places more efficient and more satisfactory cultivators; on the other hand, the tenants resisted the payment of rent and subjected both the landlords and the new tenants to all manner of outrages. The indignation of the landlords was increased by the Under-Secretary, Thomas Drummond. Drummond, a vigorous administrator, was convinced of the necessity for a strong central control, and reorganised the magistracy and the police on lines which greatly strengthened the Castle government and did much for the preservation of law and order; but he was antagonistic to the landlords as a class, and his pronouncement that property had "rights as well as duties" at a moment when the popular turbulence had reached a very high pitch was regarded by them at least as an incentive to violence and disorder.

The Melbourne ministry sought to apply in Ireland principles analogous to those of the amended Poor Law in England and the English Municipal Government Act. But with its fall and the return to power of Sir Robert Peel at the end of 1841 the truce between the Irish leader and the imperial government came to an end. The demand for Repeal was immediately revived; and from this time forward it never ceased in one form or another to be pressed by popular leaders in Ireland as a necessary condition without which it was vain to hope that any policy of alternate or combined



coercion and conciliation could produce peace in that island. Unlike the demands arising directly from the religious and the agrarian questions, it found no sympathy either in England or Scotland; and the fact that all other Irish demands were associated with it unfortunately tended to counteract much of the sympathy which they might otherwise have attracted.

At the outset the Repeal movement seemed languid; but O'Connell brought into play all his influence and all his great powers of organisation. The Irish priesthood rallied to him, a fervid group of younger men who became known as "Young Ireland" joined him, and the agitation was developed on lines which appeared to be exceedingly threatening, though O'Connell himself was, as always, persistent in the repudiation of any appeal to violence. Threats of coercive measures were met by the repeated assembly of huge meetings, and the agitation was accompanied by an increase of crimes and outrages. At last O'Connell and others were arrested, tried, and condemned to long terms of imprisonment on a charge of conspiracy. But the verdict was quashed by the House of Peers on the ground that Catholics had been improperly excluded from the jury panel.



Daniel O'Connell.

[From the painting by T. Garrick.]

O'Connell was set at liberty, but for whatever reason assumed a less aggressive attitude and lost that control which he had so long exercised in Ireland, and which now passed to the members of the Young Ireland group, who were very much more inclined to extreme and unconstitutional methods than their former leader. Peel, on the other hand, always ready to be impressed by demonstrations of popular feeling, evidently began to doubt the soundness of the position to which he had hitherto clung—to believe that there was more justification than he had supposed for the demand for remedial measures. The Devon Commission was appointed to investigate the land question. Just before the first potato famine in 1845 its report was issued, and revealed the extraordinarily unsatisfactory relations between landlords and tenants involved by the existing system. The peasant clung to the soil partly from sentimental reasons and partly because if he left his holding he had nowhere else to go. In order to stay he would agree to any terms, though he was by no means equally willing to keep to them. Consequently an immense proportion of the land was rack-rented far above its proper value. A vast quantity of the land was owned by absentee landlords



whose agents were concerned simply to get the best return they could for the landlord. In other and worse cases the effective proprietor was a mortgagee, more determined even than the landlord's agent to extort the uttermost farthing from the tenant. If the tenant improved his holding at his own expense he got no compensation, but was called upon to pay a higher rent, because a higher rent would be obtainable from another tenant on account of the improvements which he had made. Tenants were fast in the toils of money-lenders, and many of the landlords were hopelessly sunk in debt. There were many landlords who dealt justly enough with their tenants, many more who would have been willing to do so but for their own debts ; but the law gave no protection to the tenants. Consequently the tenants took the law into their own hands and enrolled themselves in the secret societies, which enforced their own code with a severity more relentless than that of the law itself.

The report of the Devon Commission bore no fruit ; for although a tentative measure was introduced in the House of Lords to deal with the problems which it had exposed, the bill was shelved. Legislative interference with the relations between landlord and tenant was objectionable in England to the landed interest, and was opposed to the *laissez faire* doctrines of commerce which were on the verge of achieving their triumph. Nothing therefore was done. At the same time Peel introduced measures which were intended to pacify religious hostilities, but actually had the opposite effect. A large grant was made to the College of the Maynooth, where candidates for the Catholic priesthood were trained ; Protestants in England and Ireland denounced the endowment of Roman Catholicism. A number of colleges were set up on non-sectarian principles ; Catholics joined Protestants in denouncing the "Godless colleges."

Then came the potato famine, with the misery, destitution, and starvation which followed in its train. Starving men do not stop to reason, and crime as well as famine stalked through the country. Peel strove to relieve the destitution, even while the extreme advocates of *laissez faire* proclaimed the vanity and the folly of interfering with the law of demand and supply ; but at the same time he proceeded to introduce another Coercion Bill for the preservation of order, to the indignation of the advanced Liberals. With them the Protectionists united, bent on vengeance for the Corn Bill, and on the day when the Lords passed the Repeal of the Corn Law the Commons threw out the Government Coercion Bill. Peel resigned and Russell took office.

But for the second time the potato plague smote the land even more cruelly than before. The Government made immense efforts to meet the calamity. It started relief works, in themselves for the most part of no permanent utility. Private sympathy and charity came to its aid, and much was undeniably done to reduce the appalling effects of the catastrophe. But the rigid free-traders of those days recognised no difference between a working policy and an emergency policy ; there was no relaxa-



tion of the principle that the supply of food must be left to the ordinary operations of trade, and the ordinary operations of trade did not reach the remotest and poorest districts. Relief, too, was granted only under extremely stringent conditions, and numbers of tenants were practically obliged to surrender their holdings in order to qualify for obtaining it. Crowds of emigrants flocked out of the country, and the census of 1851 showed that the population of Ireland had been reduced by not less than two millions. And if many of the Irish landlords behaved, as undoubtedly they did, with a splendid generosity, there were others who used the law mercilessly to effect on their estates clearances which they hoped would enable them to plant the soil with a more efficient tenantry and to turn their land to a more profitable account. The actual effect was that both agrarian antagonisms between tenants and landlords and national antagonisms between Irish and English were embittered and intensified. Outrages multiplied again, and in 1848 desperation produced a futile insurrection headed by Smith O'Brien. It was suppressed without difficulty, but increased the general soreness, which also inevitably resulted from the inevitable Coercion Bill. Nor did the Government attempt to meet the problem by treating the system of land tenure as the root of the evil; it contented itself instead with passing the Encumbered Estates Act, which removed indeed a large number of the poverty-stricken landlords whose existence as landlords made improvement impossible, but at the same time left their places to be taken by a new class of landlords generally disposed to treat their estates on strict commercial principles, with no inclination to sympathise with the tenantry or to recognise any rights not secured to them by the law.

## VI

## THE COLONIES AND AMERICA

The early years of Queen Victoria's reign form a very definite epoch in the history of British colonial development. In effect during those years the more important colonies all acquired an advanced degree of autonomy. Some of them in 1833 were possessed of legislative assemblies, but even in the most advanced of them those assemblies were in part nominated, and in every case the executive government was responsible to the governor and to the Crown, not to the legislature. That is to say, the administrative offices were all held at the Crown's nomination and did not change hands with the changes of party predominance in the Chambers. The situation, in fact, was very much like that in England before the system of party government came into full play. In the course of the next twenty years all the leading colonies had acquired elective legislative assemblies, and in nearly all of them ministries were practically constructed in accordance with the party majority in the legislature.



The change began with Canada, where discontent was already becoming rife before the Reform Bill was passed in England. Both in Upper and in Lower Canada the cause of discontent lay largely in the fact that the administrative offices had become the virtual monopoly of a few families. In Lower Canada the trouble was intensified because these predominant families were British, whereas the mass of the population was of French blood, French in its ideas, traditions, and language. The development of the great republic on the south fostered advanced political ideas. Both in Upper and Lower Canada the elected legislative assembly raised an insistent demand for increased control over administration, and claimed that the



Map of the Dominion of Canada

Second Chamber also should be an elected instead of a nominated body, a change which in Lower Canada would have ensured an overwhelming French preponderance. In 1837 the troubles culminated in an armed revolt in Lower Canada known as Papineau's Rebellion, from the politician who was its recognised leader. Even advanced Canadian opinion did not in fact approve of such extreme action; the revolt was suppressed without difficulty, and a corresponding attempt at insurrection in the Upper Province scarcely made head at all. The home government adopted an unprecedented course. It suspended the constitution of the Canadas, and despatched a commission, invested with the supreme control, to investigate the whole question of Canadian discontent, and to conduct the government pending the results of the enquiry.



The Governor-in-Chief and High Commissioner was Lord Durham; but at the instance of the Opposition restrictions were placed upon the absolute powers with which it was originally intended to invest him. He was a man of strong and independent personality, very self-confident and somewhat arrogant, a difficult colleague who made many enemies, holding views which in England were regarded as dangerously advanced, but endowed with keen penetration. On his arrival in Canada he was faced with the difficulty of dealing with the political prisoners. In existing circumstances it would have been impossible that their trial in the ordinary course should have satisfactory results. Therefore, on his own responsibility he issued an ordinance banishing those of the rebels who had fled over the frontier, while those who were in his hands were deported to the Bermudas. Members of both groups were forbidden to return to Canada upon pain of death until permission should be granted. With the way thus cleared he proceeded, with the aid of his council, to investigate the whole situation and to prepare a report upon it for the home government. In his banishment ordinance however he had exceeded his powers; a hot attack was opened upon him in England; and the Melbourne Government, with a small and precarious majority in the Commons and a hostile majority in the Lords, gave way. Lord Durham was recalled, and the governorship was placed in the hands of Sir John Colborne. Durham, on his departure, issued a very injudicious proclamation, which was virtually an attack upon the Government which had deserted him. Canadian opinion was strongly on the side of the man whose sympathetic grasp of the situation in Canada had been made evident; nevertheless Durham had ruined his own career, and died shortly afterwards.

Colborne conducted the administration with ability and firmness. A fresh attempt at insurrection was promptly suppressed, and raids from the United States were sharply dealt with. Durham had sealed his own political fate, but he had done his work for Canada. A bill providing a new constitution for the colony was introduced and passed in 1840, and this Canadian Act of Reunion adopted his report almost in its entirety. He had seen that the prime necessity was the establishment of a national Canadian sentiment in the place of the existing local and racial sentiment. The two Canadas were united under a single legislature, and endowed with practically complete powers of self-government, while local government was put in the hands of local elective bodies. The Second Chamber, though enlarged, still consisted of nominees, and the executive government was still in form responsible to the Crown and not to the legislature. Nevertheless, before long the powers of the legislature predominated, and except in matters of imperial concern Canada had in a few years become a completely self-governing state with "responsible" government. The same course was followed in the maritime provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

In Jamaica also at the beginning of the queen's reign serious difficulties









GREAT COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, IN 1857

From a view published in 1857.



GREAT COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, IN 1912

From a photograph.







nings of the colony which afterwards was named Victoria, and its capital, Melbourne, was founded in 1837. As yet it was an offshoot of New South Wales and was administered by officials under the New South Wales government. South Australia was colonised from England in 1834; its capital, Adelaide, took its name from William's queen. In 1839 New Zealand was annexed, completing the list of the Australasian colonies, since the settlement of Queensland and of Western Australia had been commenced in the previous decade.

The convict settlements with which the colonisation had originated had now become a serious drawback. In the settlements begun later than 1829 there were no convicts; and transportation to New South Wales ceased in 1840, to Queensland in 1849, and to Tasmania in 1853. The



Gold-seekers at Bathurst, Western Australia, on their way to the fields at Ophir, 1851.

[From a print published at Sydney, N.S.W., in 1851.]

Canadian troubles in fact awakened the British Government to the wisdom of giving the great Australasian settlements the status of free self-governing colonies. It was not that the modern imperial conception had taken hold of men's minds; the idea was rather that the principle of self-government ought to be applied to all British communities which were sufficiently advanced to admit of it. Free self-government was incompatible with the use of the colonies as convict settlements; hence the gradual abolition of the system.

Hitherto every colony in Australia had been controlled by a governor with a small nominated council, the council being primarily merely consultative, though by degrees the arbitrary powers of the governor became limited. In the year 1842 came the beginnings of representation in New South Wales. The legislative council was enlarged, and two-thirds of the members were elected. The movement towards self-government was not



at first rapid, but a great change came over the character of the Australian population with the discovery of gold-fields, which brought in a rush of immigrants. In 1854 the four most highly organised of the colonies were given responsible government in full measure, their several constitutions varying in accordance with the wishes they had severally expressed. In every case one chamber was wholly elective, though the composition of the

second chambers differed. Each colony had its governor, but in each the executive was responsible to the legislature. Thenceforth they, like Canada, were virtually independent states except as concerned relations with foreign Powers.

The story of New Zealand requires separate attention. The Maoris, the native population of those islands, were an advanced race infinitely superior to the "black-fellows" of Australia and Tasmania both physically and intellectually. The annexation of New Zealand was carried out after the Treaty of Waitangi, an agreement made with the native chiefs. The relations between the Maoris and the British settlers occupy a much more prominent position than corresponding questions in Australia. There the natives were primitive nomads, without anything which could be called organisation.



Map of New Zealand.

The Maori, on the other hand, lived in a community which had quite definite conceptions with regard to law and to property; he was no doubt a barbarian, but he had a definite civilisation of his own. When the Maori chiefs made their bargain they knew what the bargain meant, and they expected the white man to keep it. They were to be under the protection of the Queen of England. The land was to remain, as it was at the time, specifically the property of the tribes. Only the tribe could alienate it; no individual chief or other person had power to do so. And if a tribe was willing to part with or sell any of its land, the only recognised legal purchaser, the only person who could acquire possession from the tribe, was to be the governor representing the queen. Only from the governor could the individual white man obtain land in New Zealand. In Australia,



on the contrary, no one had ever dreamed of regarding an inch of the soil as the property of any individual native or group of natives.

Unfortunately, would-be settlers ignored the treaty, under the mistaken impression that they had to deal with merely ignorant savages. They bought land for themselves which they had no right to do, from chiefs who had no power to sell it. The Maoris protested and backed their protests by force. Only the interference of the then acting governor, who recognised the essential justice of the Maori position, prevented the white men from being driven into the sea. The situation, however, remained extremely dangerous until the arrival, in 1845, of one of the greatest of all British colonial administrators, George Grey, who had already proved his capacity as governor of South Australia. Grey resolutely insisted on the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi, suppressed the acquisition of land by irregular means, won the confidence of the Maori chiefs, and brought them to aid him in suppressing those who continued recalcitrant, when they saw that he had established control over his own countrymen. The completeness of his self-reliance was again demonstrated and justified when the home authorities supplied New Zealand with an unsatisfactory constitution. Grey refused to put it in force until his own views had been taken into consideration. So effective was his protest that the constitution was withdrawn; and ultimately in 1852 his own scheme was practically accepted establishing responsible government analogous to that which was already in force in Canada, and was set up two years later in the four leading colonies of Australia.

Eventful also were these years in the third great field of British colonial enterprise, South Africa. The history of South African problems cannot be fairly grasped without a preliminary sketch of some of the elements which generated them. In the first place it must be understood that the original native inhabitants of the Cape where the Dutch colonists had planted themselves were not negroes but mainly Hottentots, a yellow-skinned race entirely distinct from the negroes, though possibly having a mixture of negro blood. Beyond the borders of the colony, inland and on the east coast from Natal up to the Portuguese territory, were the tribes of Bantus, otherwise called Kaffirs—negro people of a very fine physique, savages certainly, but often with a social and especially a military development which had passed far beyond a rudimentary stage. Comparatively but only comparatively speaking the southern tribes were peaceful agriculturists upon whom the ultra-military tribes of the Zulus and the Matabele were pressing from the north. Apart from the subject Hottentots, however, there was in the Cape Colony a considerable black slave population not drawn from the Kaffirs but imported.

Now in 1834 the Dutch at the Cape were already irritated by the comparative anglicising of the institutions of the colony. In 1834 came the Act for the Emancipation of the Slaves, for which the farmers were shortly to find that they were to receive compensation extremely inadequate from their point of view. Also for the past fifty years there had been periodical



collisions with the Kaffirs, who were with difficulty held within their own borders, and collisions became more frequent in consequence of the planting of many British settlers in the eastern regions on the Kaffir border. With



Map of South Africa.

the exception of the missionaries, every one, British and Dutch alike, regarded the Kaffirs as dangerous savages who could only be kept in restraint by fear; but the humanitarian spirit was at this time extremely active in England, where the missionaries had the ear of the public. Hence just at this time the governor, Sir Benjamin Durban, received positive instructions which, in effect, precluded him from such a demonstration of force as was needed to preserve peace on the Border. The result was that at Christmas time a horde of Kaffirs poured across the Fish River, robbing, raiding, and murdering. Of course there was a war, and of course the Kaffirs were beaten; but even then the instructions from home were on the same lines as before. None of the precautions considered necessary on the

spot were to be taken. The Kaffirs were not to be irritated by the overbearing white man.

The cup of the Boers or up-country Dutch farmers was full. The English had disturbed their time-honoured institutions, adopting an air of superiority. They had robbed them of their slaves. Now they would neither allow them to protect themselves against the bloodthirsty Bantu nor provide them with protection. Therefore they would go forth into the wilderness, shaking off the dust of their feet against the British as the children of Israel departed from Egypt to find the Land of Promise. So



the Great Trek began. Hundreds of Boer families—men, women, and children, with their cattle and their baggage waggons—crossed the Orange River, which was virtually the boundary of the colony, and marched away into the interior to seek independence. It did not strike them that they were British subjects, and would not cease to be British subjects merely because they had removed themselves into barbarian territory.

In those parts the native tribes lived in deadly fear of the Matabele army, which had recently taken possession of the country beyond the Vaal. The enterprising Boers crossed the Vaal, were duly attacked by vast hordes of Matabele, and, fighting with dogged obstinacy within their "laager," routed them with terrific slaughter. The Matabele retired beyond the next great river, the Limpopo.



Port Natal in 1852, and the arrival of the first mail steamer.

[From a drawing made in 1852.]

Another set of the emigrants crossed the eastern mountain range called the Drakensberg, and descended into what is now the colony of Natal. They negotiated with Dingan, the king of the mighty warrior tribes of the Zulus, to procure land from him. He received their envoys with fair words and promises, then suddenly fell upon them and slaughtered them. Then he launched his legions against the nearest Boer camp. Only one of the four hundred souls there escaped to give warning to the rest of the emigrants, who were thus able to beat off the next attack. But it was not till many months had passed and many lives had been lost that an overwhelming defeat was inflicted upon Dingan upon "Dingan's Day," beside the stream thenceforth known as the Blood River.

But the Boers had hardly proclaimed a republic in what was now in effect conquered territory, when the British government at the Cape



decided that the conquered territory belonged to Great Britain. The Boers in sullen resentment again retired across the Drakensberg, and the British established the colony of Natal. The Boers between the Orange River and the Vaal accepted the position of a dependency of the British Crown under the name of the Orange River Sovereignty in 1848; but in 1852 the home government, by no means anxious to shoulder more extensive responsibilities in South Africa, in effect recognised the independence of the Boers beyond the Vaal by the Sand River Convention. To complete this portion of the story, it may be added that after two years more the Orange River Sovereignty was deliberately cut adrift by the home government against the will both of Cape Colony and of the Boers themselves. The Orange Free State, as it was now called, was left to work out its own salvation, which it did for many years with remarkable success.

In the course of the colonial policy by this time universally prevalent, representative government was thrust upon the Cape Colony in 1853, a boon not greatly desired by the colonists themselves. But the executive was not yet made responsible to the legislature.

## VII

### INDIA

When the first Reformed Parliament was opened at Westminster Lord William Bentinck was still Governor-General in India. Besides the administrative progress recorded in the previous chapter, two other important measures are connected with his term of office. All previous Governors-General had accepted as axiomatic the principle of Cornwallis that only Europeans should be allowed to hold posts of responsibility within the British dominion. Under Bentinck's rule the theory was discarded while the practice was retained. Race, colour, and religion were no longer recognised officially as barriers to office; but as a matter of fact, neither while appointment continued to be made by selection, nor at a later period when admission to the public services was obtained by competitive examinations, did the natives of India obtain anything more than a very small share in the higher business of government, outside the native states. Nevertheless the official acceptance of the theory was a condition which made the official adoption of the practice possible whenever it should seem compatible with the public security.

The second measure in fact had the same object in view. This was the establishment and endowment of an educational system which was to imbue the intelligent Eastern mind with the practical wisdom of the West. From the study of English science and English literature the natives would learn to recognise the superiority of Western civilisation, would imbibe Western ideas, and would become fitter for association with the British in



the task of government. Thomas Babington Macaulay, a brilliant young Whig, who was sent out as legal adviser of the Indian Council in 1834, was the most energetic and persuasive promoter of the scheme; but it scarcely answered the precise purposes with which it was initiated. The natives who profited by the new education belonged almost entirely to a class extremely intelligent but apt to be deficient in the moral qualities which the natives of India require in their rulers. Moreover, while they duly acquired a literary acquaintance with Western ideas, these did not displace the oriental conceptions which were rooted in their minds from birth, but were only grafted on to them, bearing a fruit very different from that which had been intended.

Bentinck was succeeded after a brief interval by Lord Auckland, and a period unprecedentedly peaceful was followed by one of renewed warfare, though the wars were nearly all beyond the borders of the British dominion.

In the north-west corner of what is now British India lay the powerful and independent Sikh state of the Punjab, which had been consolidated and still was ruled by Ranjit Singh. Beyond the mountains was the turbulent Afghan nation, beyond Afghanistan lay Persia, and behind Persia was Russia, creeping always steadily forward, absorbing new territories decade by decade, and, as Palmerston and all Indian statesmen believed, aiming at the ultimate appropriation of India itself. Persia was still accounted a great power, and half the Mohammedan world regarded the Shah of Persia as the lineal head of Islam. The idea then was that Russia intended to make a catspaw of Persia. Persia was to be encouraged to re-absorb Mohammedan Afghanistan, once a province of its own; and was then to call upon the Mussulmans of India to rise against the British ascendancy and restore the Moslem supremacy under the ægis of Persia. Upon the chaos that would supervene Russia would descend and set up her own dominion.

British attention to Asiatic problems is always fitful; successive British Governments had omitted to pay due regard to the relations between Russia and Persia; Britain had failed in her treaty obligations to support Persia against Russian aggression; and before 1830 the Persian government had made up its mind that its true interests lay not in a British but in a Russian alliance. In 1837 a Persian army marched upon Herat, the great city of Western Afghanistan. Unhappily Lord Auckland and his advisers misread the situation in Afghanistan, where Dost Mohammed, the ruler of Kabul, was not at all inclined to submit either to Persian or to Russian domination. The true British policy would have been to give the Dost vigorous support in resisting Persian aggression; but his attitude was misunderstood, and it was believed that he meant to play into the hands of Russia. Many years before, Shah Shuja, then reigning over Afghanistan, had been driven from the country into British territory, and the power of Dost Mohammed's family had then been established. The plan to which



the Indian government now committed itself was the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne at Kabul as the ally or puppet of the British.

By September 1838 the stubborn defence of Herat, brilliantly conducted under the guidance of a young British officer, Eldred Pottinger, had proved too much for the Shah ; the siege was raised and the Persian army retired. But although the imminent danger was removed, the British Government persisted in its design in defiance of all the most experienced authorities ; and in 1839 the British expedition advanced into Afghanistan. Kandahar was captured, then Ghazni. Dost Mohammed retreated, Shah Shuja was enthroned at Kabul, and then it became evident that his position could only be secured by the retention of a great British force and a British Resident at the capital. In the next year, 1840, Dost Mohammed surrendered to the British and was removed to British territory. Peace apparently reigned ; but there was a rude awakening. The chiefs of the Afghan tribes had at first been pacified by subsidies, and they were the more enraged when the subsidies were withdrawn. The country was soon in a state of ferment unperceived by the Resident MacNaghten. In November 1841 a great riot broke out in Kabul. Allowed to go unchecked, it developed into a general insurrection. The commander of the great British force at Kabul was hopelessly incompetent, and the Resident was compelled to accept an ignominious treaty under which the country was to be entirely evacuated by the British, who were to leave hostages behind them in the hands of the Afghans. The garrisons at Kandahar, Ghazni, and Jellalabad repudiated their orders and refused to budge. MacNaghten was murdered, and in midwinter the British—men, women and children, civilians and soldiers, numbering some fifteen thousand souls—started on their defenceless march from Kabul only to be massacred in the mountain passes. Of all that host only one escaped, and reached Jellalabad.

Such was the great disaster which for the moment seemed to threaten the very existence of the British power in India. It took place just at the moment when Peel's great administration began in England. Lord Ellenborough arrived in India to take Auckland's place, and active steps were taken to retrieve the position. The force at Kandahar held its own without difficulty ; that at Jellalabad only with extreme difficulty and by distinguished gallantry ; Ghazni surrendered. The first order issued for general evacuation was practically cancelled by a second, which instructed General Pollock with a relieving force which was entering Afghanistan *via* Jellalabad to effect the evacuation *via* Kabul. Between April and September Pollock's force and Nott's from Kandahar completely demonstrated to the Afghans the futility of resistance, and the British flag was again hoisted at Kabul. In the meanwhile the luckless Shah Shuja had been assassinated, and now the British Government did what it ought to have done in the first instance. It restored Dost Mohammed to the throne of Kabul, since he was obviously the chief incomparably the best fitted to hold the reins of power ; and it made with him the firm alliance which he would gladly have accepted at



the outset. To that alliance he remained admirably faithful, and his loyalty proved of immense service in the troublous years that followed. The situation was saved, but British prestige had received a terrible blow in spite of the triumphal processions and grandiloquent proclamations by which Ellenborough endeavoured to persuade himself and the natives of India that the overwhelming power of the British had been magnificently vindicated.

Another demonstration was given in the next year, 1843, the one example of a deliberate act of wanton aggression in our Indian annals. The annexation of Sindh was not inaccurately described by its perpetrator, Sir Charles Napier, as a piece of beneficent rascality. Sindh lies on the Lower Indus, beyond what was then the sphere of British dominion. Napier, sent to this region as Resident or Agent, picked a quarrel with the Amirs, routed their forces in a brilliant campaign at Miani, and the annexation of the whole territory followed. Only a few months later came another campaign, this time against Gwalior. Gwalior was the capital of the Maratha Maharaja Sindhia, who at this time was a child. The Gwalior government controlled what was now the one powerful native army in India outside the Punjab. The effective ruler at Gwalior was the Rani, the young widow of the last Sindhia. The actual Sindhia was a young boy, whom she had adopted; for, by a very singular fatality, no Sindhia had ever left an heir of his body; in every case the successor had been a child adopted in accordance with the Hindu law of succession. The Rani's power depended upon her popularity with the army, so that in effect the army was the government; and the army was arrogant and aggressive. In the existing circumstances, since the Rani seemed determined to pay no heed to the advice or instructions of the paramount power, a demand was made that the Gwalior army should be reduced and the British subsidiary contingent enlarged. The demand was backed by the presence of a considerable British force on the Gwalior frontier. The British ultimatum was ignored, the British army crossed the border, and in two fiercely fought engagements at Maharajpur and Puniar the Rani's forces were shattered. The government was placed in the hands of a Council of Regency appointed by the British and practically directed by the British Resident, until the young Sindhia should come of age. The native army was reduced from forty thousand to nine thousand men, and the British contingent, that is to say the sepoy force under British officers, was increased to ten thousand.

The result of a single-combat between Gwalior and the British was never doubtful. The real danger lay in the north-west; the real value of



Dost Mohammed.  
[From a native painting.]



the Maharajpur campaign lay in the removal of a great hostile force posted upon our flank and capable of co-operating very effectively with the Sikhs of the Punjab. Had the Sikhs attacked first while the Gwalior army was in full strength the latter would have been able to fall upon the British communications, enclose the British army, and threaten the rear of the British advance ; and in that case complete disaster might have been the result. Speculations on such points, however, are somewhat vain. Lord Ellenborough's methods created so much uneasiness that he was recalled to make way for Sir Henry Hardinge, who had won his spurs in the Peninsula War and was not without administrative experience ; and had the Gwalior army still been dangerous he would undoubtedly have taken adequate military precautions.

Hardinge was never in doubt about the menace from the Punjab. Ranjit Singh died in 1839, and the Lahore state, as the Punjab was also called, was now without any strong central government. The old Maharajah's chieftainship had been a kind of military despotism based upon an army and upon institutions of a very exceptional type. The Sikhs had been primarily a religious brotherhood, a sort of reformed sect of Hindus who had abjured many of the peculiar institutions of Hinduism, notably that of caste. Of diverse races at first, they had become by exclusive association for some three centuries a special breed with marked characteristics of their own. The brotherhood, subjected to a fierce persecution, had organised itself into an army under the name of the Khalsa, and, though forming only a small percentage of the population, it had in the latter years of the eighteenth century dominated the Punjab. The Sikh army was the one great organisation in India which could be called democratic in its structure ; but, besides the Khalsa proper, the great chiefs or sirdars could, like medieval barons, bring large numbers of their own retainers into the field. Working upon this basis and helped by European officers, Ranjit Singh had moulded the Khalsa into an army probably the best disciplined and the most powerful, at least in comparison with its numbers, ever controlled by an Indian monarch. Ranjit's death left the Khalsa completely master of the country ; or would have done so if the army had realised its own strength and had possessed a directing head. It was not long in realising its strength, but it still lacked a head. The new Maharajah was a boy, and the reins of power were grasped by his mother, the Rani Jindan, whom Henry Lawrence described as the Messalina of the Punjab. After a series of intrigues and assassinations the Rani seemed to have established herself and her paramour Lal Singh at the head of the government (it may be remarked that every Sikh bore the name of Singh), but not without extreme jealousy on the part of many of the sirdars ; while the sirdars and the Rani alike felt that the really dominant power was the Khalsa.

The Khalsa knew its own military strength long before it awoke to its political power. It had proved itself decisively the master of every foe with whom it had fought. Even in Ranjit's day it would have hailed



with joy a proposal to challenge the power of the British, but that astute monarch was alive to the vast reserves of force which lay behind the British Government in India. But there was no one now who could dominate the Khalsa, and both the Rani and the sirdars perceived possibilities of great gain to themselves if it should hurl itself against the white men. If it were beaten its power would be broken, and every man dreamed that then his own private ambitions might find an opportunity of realisation. If it were victorious the Sikhs would become the masters of India, and every Sikh would have his chance. So the army was egged on to challenge fate. Early in December 1845 the news reached Sir Henry Hardinge that the Sikhs had crossed the river Sutlej, the border-line of the Punjab state.

Ever since his arrival in India the Governor-General had been preparing for this emergency as rapidly as was possible without dangerous ostentation. Troops had been concentrated in the north-west provinces and in the outposts which guarded the Sikh frontier. Two converging columns were promptly on the march to effect a junction with the garrison of the advanced post at Firozpur. They met the advancing Sikhs at Mudki, and after hot fighting drove them off the field. Two days later the advance towards Firozpur was renewed, but the way was blocked by a great Sikh army which had entrenched itself at Firozshah. The attack was delayed till the afternoon in order that the British might be reinforced by a column which was on its way from Firozpur. The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Gough, would have attacked at once, but Hardinge considered the risk too great, and used the power which he possessed to assume the supreme command himself. A furious contest raged long after darkness had fallen, but the Sikhs held their entrenchments and the British passed a night of intense anxiety, resolved to renew the attack on the morrow, but in actual doubt whether they might not be themselves overwhelmed and annihilated. The morning brought relief, when the British troops rushed the entrenchments to find that the Sikhs had already withdrawn under cover of darkness.

The Sikh invasion was broken; it was now the turn of the British to invade the Punjab. Two months were passed in preparations for forcing the passage of the Sutlej, during which there were two sharp engagements at Bulowal and Aliwal. Then came the decisive battle at Sobraon, where the Sikhs held the passage of the Sutlej. Only after desperate fighting their entrenchments were carried, and the Sikh army was driven over or into the river, after which there was no further possibility of resistance.

The British marched to Lahore, bent not on annexation but on establishing an efficient government. A Council of Regency was appointed; Henry Lawrence was left as Resident with very large powers of control over the administration, which in various frontier districts was delegated to subordinate British officers; a large part of the Sikh army was disbanded; and at the earnest request of the sirdars a considerable British



force remained in the country. This was to be withdrawn at the end of the year; when once more, at the request of the sirdars, the troops were allowed to remain and the administration was virtually placed in the hands of Lawrence, under whose powerful and sympathetic rule it seemed probable that the country would soon settle down in peaceable and orderly fashion.

Very different was the actual event. At the end of 1847 all seemed to promise well. Hardinge, now a Viscount, left India in January, believing that there were no serious troubles in store. With him went the great administrator of the Punjab. Within four months a flame had been kindled which soon blazed into a general insurrection, necessitating another sanguinary campaign which ended with the annexation of the Punjab and its final absorption into the direct British dominion.

Lawrence's successor at Lahore was an experienced and capable official but of no exceptional power. Hardinge's successor in the Governor-Generalship, Lord Dalhousie, was a man of very exceptional abilities, but his capacities were still unknown. The veterans of the Khalsa were sore at their overthrow, which they still attributed not to British superiority but to the treachery of their own leaders. The minds of the sirdars were divided; they resented any other ascendancy than their own, but they distrusted each other; they were not sure of themselves; but even though the British had remained in the Punjab at their own request they suspected them of intending to establish themselves permanently. Thus when insurrection broke out it was not a national movement, but it was in danger of at once becoming so unless the British ascendancy were forthwith asserted vigorously and decisively. It began as a local revolt at Multan. The governor, Mulraj, resigned. His resignation was accepted by the official Sikh government at Lahore, and two British officers were sent to Multan to take over the administration until the new governor should be appointed. The troops in Multan rose, murdered the officers, and proclaimed a revolt against the British dominion.

Technically there was no British dominion. The government was the Sikh government, acting temporarily under the advice and with the support of the British Resident and some British, that is to say Sepoy, regiments. The British Government therefore called upon the Sikh government to suppress the revolt. A young frontier officer, Herbert Edwardes, hearing that British officers at Multan were in danger, but not that they had been murdered, at once marched to their rescue from the Derajat, the hill-frontier, with a force mainly of the hillmen, who, throughout, showed an admirable devotion to their British officers, the more so as they had no love for their Sikh masters. He acted on his own responsibility. He had already routed the insurgents and driven them into Multan, when he was joined by the troops of the Lahore government under the command of Sher Singh. It was, however, obvious that those troops could not



be trusted, and a British column was presently despatched from Lahore to take part in the siege. Dalhousie accepted the view of his commander-in-chief, Lord Gough, that it would be worse than useless to send a small expeditionary force into the Punjab, since it would be superfluous if the insurrection did not become general, and would be annihilated if it did.

The result was that the insurrection did become general. The British column from Lahore had hardly joined Edwardes before Multan when Sher Singh withdrew with his whole force from the siege and began to gather all the old members of the Khalsa to his standard. Some six weeks later, Gough, with the army of invasion which he had been organising, was in the Upper Punjab seeking to force a decisive battle upon Sher Singh. At the crossing of the river Chenab a sharp skirmish and a sharp engagement took place at Ramnagar and at Sadulapur; but Sher Singh made good his retreat and entrenched himself at Rassul on the river Jhelum. The Sikh army, established in an entrenched position, was not to be attacked hastily. Presently, however, Gough advanced, and found the enemy, always behind entrenchments, at Chillianwalla, where there was a furious engagement with very heavy losses on both sides, and the Sikhs were again able to retire to their position at Rassul, though they left the British masters of the field of battle. Rassul was impregnable, and Gough could only hold Sher Singh under watch. A month later Sher Singh, who had received considerable reinforcements, suddenly slipped out of Rassul. But in the meanwhile Multan had fallen, and the British column was on its way to join the commander-in-chief. A week after his march Gough brought Sher Singh to battle at Gujarat, where the Sikh army was decisively and finally shattered. The Sikhs accepted the situation; this time they knew that they had had a stand-up fight with the British and had been soundly beaten without any treachery on the part of their own leaders. Perhaps there was hardly any one except Henry Lawrence himself who was not satisfied that the annexation of the Punjab was now the only course possible. It was the course adopted by Dalhousie, who regarded the new province with an especial favour which it speedily repaid.

## VIII

### EARLY VICTORIAN

In a constitutional monarchy the personality of the monarch, however striking it may be, is of less importance in the national history than in days and realms in which the Crown directly controls national policy. The dates of the accession of kings and queens are no more than convenient landmarks, in themselves signalling only minor events. George III. was



the only one of the Hanoverian kings whose accession marked a departure from the normal lines of national development, excepting of course his great-grandfather. Although Queen Victoria herself played no insignificant part on the stage of history, her succession rather ensured continuity of development than gave it a new direction. The characteristics of what we call the Victorian Era distinguished her second uncle's reign as well as her own. The epoch, the starting-point of the era, is marked by the Reform Bill, whether we consider its political or its social aspects, and we can legitimately apply the term Early Victorian to the twenty years which followed the passing of that measure.

During those twenty years the Industrial Revolution was carried to completion by the huge development of steam traffic both by land and by water. Passenger traffic by rail was in effect inaugurated by the opening of the Manchester and Liverpool railway in 1830; in 1850 all the main railway lines were at work. The railroad carried goods in an hour perhaps



Open Coaches on the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, 1831.

[From a print.]

as far as the old horse haulage conveyed them in a day, and in immensely greater quantities at a time. An Act of Parliament in 1844 required the railway companies to provide a sufficiency of trains with covered accommodation for passengers at the rate of a penny a mile—the origin of the term “Parliamentary Trains.” Forced against their will to provide cheap fares, the railway managers very soon found that the innovation increased instead of diminishing their profits. The trains were used by thousands of passengers, most of whom in the old days would have been obliged either to stay at home or to tramp on foot, helped forward by an occasional lift on a friendly waggon. The steam-engine drew tons of goods where canals had carried them by the hundredweight. The new traffic made its way in defiance of æsthetic and academic opposition, and in spite of the great financial panics which followed upon excessive inflation especially in 1845.

The steamship established itself less rapidly. The first ocean line was only opened in 1839, the year after the first passage of the Atlantic completed under steam. It is to be remarked that even these first steamers covered the distance in only about thrice the time taken by the swiftest



modern vessels, while the speed of George Stephenson's locomotive has hardly even been doubled.

Out of the development of steam traffic came the creation in 1840 of the Penny Post, carrying with it an enormous increase in correspondence; and immediately after the establishment of the Penny Post came the Electric Telegraph. The first telegraphic line in England was set up between London and Slough in 1844, and seven years later came the laying of the first submarine cable between Dover and Calais. It is a little difficult to realise that until Queen Victoria was seated on the throne the conveyance of a letter from London to Edinburgh took nearly as long as its carriage from London to New York fifty years later, and that the journey to India might take any time from six to eighteen months instead of something under three weeks.

The most prominent feature in the modern industrial world is Trade Unionism. The formation of trade unions, combinations of the workers, primarily for the purpose of collective bargaining with the masters, became temporarily active after the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1825. But the movement was checked by the repeated failure of strikes owing to lack of funds and inefficient organisation. The political ideal, the demands formulated shortly afterwards in the People's Charter, seemed to the working man to promise better than local and sectional combinations. In the thirties, however, the movement took new shape. In place of the simple idea of the trade union, the combination of the employees in a trade, came the idea of the trades union, the combination of workers in several trades. Such a combination was the Builders' Union, which sought to unite the workmen in all the diverse departments of the building trade, an aggressive body which increased the alarm created by its aggressiveness by adopting a fantastic and melodramatic ceremonial of initiation. The masters began to announce that they would make the repudiation of this trades union a condition of employment. Another such union, more far-reaching in its conception, was the Grand National Trades Union devised by Robert Owen, who, having been an extremely successful and liberal employer of labour, developed into the champion of a reformed social order. Capitalism and competition were to disappear, and the workers were themselves to be the proprietors and controllers of all the materials and machinery of production and distribution.



Robert Owen.

These unions did in effect undoubtedly increase their power by means of intimidation. The accepted doctrine of *laissez faire*, as understood by



the masters, meant that the prosperity of trade depended on the masters having an entirely free hand in the control of their business. If combinations could resist their dictation they had not a free hand, and if the workers were coerced against their will by the combinations an unmitigated tyranny would be established. In actual fact at this time the alarm of the masters was groundless. The unions were invariably beaten if they attempted to fight, because the labour market was still largely overstocked, and labour, doing battle with capital, requires a war chest which the unions did not possess. The masters were commonly strong enough to compel the men to renounce the unions as a condition of service by signing a declaration known as the Document. But the masters also had the whole force of the Government on their side; the conspiracy laws could be applied so as effectively to paralyse the action of the unions, and the obviously unjust severity with which the law was applied in some particular instances only had the effect of embittering class hostilities. Trades Unionism and Trade Unionism were both beaten as aggressive methods of fighting capitalism, and from 1838 to 1848 Chartism held the field.

But not altogether. Intelligent working-men saw the futility of wasting the union funds on hopeless battles with masters; but unions and funds could be turned to good service on the lines of benefit societies, and on those lines their organisation could be steadily and quietly strengthened. They ceased to be aggressive, and almost confined themselves to a defensive resistance to aggression on the part of the masters. In those employments especially where skill and higher intelligence are demanded, the unions set themselves to educate their own members and to study the problems with which they had to deal in a scientific spirit. Such unions were no longer aggregations of unreasoning and hot-headed men, but bodies of intelligent persons who knew what they wanted and had at least a rational idea of how it was to be obtained. The new spirit which made trade unionism an effective force in the country found its most convincing expression in the carefully organised Amalgamated Society of Engineers, which, in 1850, brought into a single combination a number of the separate societies then existing in Lancashire and in London. The great strike of the engineers in 1852 on the questions of piece-work and overtime produced an immense impression on the public mind, because of the sobriety and discipline with which it was conducted. The men were beaten; they were obliged to return to work without gaining what they had demanded; but they had won public sympathy; their union had not been broken up, and they had given the industrial world an invaluable lesson in organisation.

If the working-men were beginning to realise their own need of education, the country was also slowly beginning to realise that education was becoming a national concern. Hitherto it had been left entirely to private enterprise. The schools in which the children of the poor were taught were maintained chiefly by the National Church and occasionally by other



religious bodies, supported by voluntary contributions. England before the Reform Bill, very unlike Scotland, was one of the worst educated countries in Europe. The spirit of reform then touched education so far that in 1833 the Government ventured upon a grant of £20,000 in its aid, to help in the building of a few more schools. Five years later came proposals for the formation of a Board or Committee of Education.

But from the moment when the application of public funds to education became a matter of debate the religious difficulty presented itself. It appeared to one side that public funds must be distributed and applied irrespective of the religious opinions of teachers or pupils. To the other side it appeared imperative that the Church should retain its effective control, since the teaching of religion was of the essence of education, and no teaching could be called religious which was not, in modern phrase, denominational. Neither side was prepared even to consider an educational system from which religion was omitted. The Liberal Government only so far got its way that its committee was appointed for the distribution of a slightly increased grant, which was not actually monopolised as hitherto by the Church schools. The subject continued to engage attention periodically, and another bill was brought in in 1843 as part of a Factory Bill. It was wrecked on the usual rock, Dissenters and Roman Catholics finding it too favourable to the Anglicans, and Anglicans finding it too favourable to Dissent.

In 1847, however, the government grant was increased to £100,000, of which the benefit was still withheld from Roman Catholics, and for fifteen years no further steps were taken.

Both in England and in Scotland religious movements were extremely active during this period. The moderation, indifferentism, or rationalism prevalent in the eighteenth century had been disturbed by the Wesleyan revival and the growth of a more vigorous Evangelicalism in the English Church. But now a new fervour of Churchmanship arose within the Anglican communion, known as the Oxford or Oriel movement because it took its rise in Oxford and especially in Oriel College, or as Tractarianism because it found its literary expression in a series of publications called Tracts for the Times. The most spiritual of its exponents was John Henry Newman, who, with many of his followers, ultimately found refuge and rest in the Church of Rome. But in the eyes of the public its most prominent figure was that of Dr. Pusey. Essentially it was a re-assertion of the Divine authority of the Catholic Church, the Church to whose priesthood the apostolic authority had been transmitted in unbroken continuity through the centuries by the rite of ordination. That authority could not



Dr. Pusey.

[From a photograph.]



be overridden by the state, and no lay jurisdiction could be recognised. The sanction for its doctrines and ritual was to be found in the decisions of the General Councils of the Church, in the teaching of the early fathers, and in the practice of the Church Universal. On this basis doctrines and practices which had been condemned as papistical were revived. Whatever views may be held with regard to those doctrines and practices the essential fact must be recognised that the movement brought a new intensity of spiritual life into the Church, while it challenged the essential doctrine of Protestantism by claiming not only that the Church was independent of the state but that the priesthood were the authoritative intermediaries of Divine Grace. The state declined to recognise the claims of the new school and continued to assert its own authority; but the Tractarians did not adopt the solution of seceding from the establishment and surrendering endowments for the sake of spiritual independence.

This, however, was the more heroic course adopted in Scotland. In that country also there was a revival of religious energy, but there was no question of dogma or ritual or priesthood. The question was that of the right of the state to control the spiritual independence of the congregation. The spiritual independence claimed was the right of the congregation to choose its own minister, whereas the state, that is to say the law, had placed the patronage in private hands. The legal question was carried to the highest court of appeal, the House of Peers, and the House of Peers upheld the rights of the patrons. Thereupon the party of spiritual independence separated itself from the establishment; a host of ministers resigned their livings, departed from their manse, and formed a church free from state control—the Free Kirk—whose clergy depended for their emoluments entirely upon stipends provided by voluntary contributions.

The splendour of the last literary period was maintained by new writers. Before 1840 Tennyson and Browning had begun to publish poetry; before 1850 Tennyson's fame was securely established, though many years were to pass before his great rival had won popular recognition. Charles Dickens gave a new joy to life with the appearance of the *Pickwick Papers* in the year of Queen Victoria's accession. Thackeray achieved a triumph with *Vanity Fair* eleven years later. Disraeli revealed himself to the world in a series of novels before he entered Parliament. Macaulay created a prose style which became the model of half the writers in England, while Carlyle, Newman, and John Ruskin began to be numbered among the prophets.



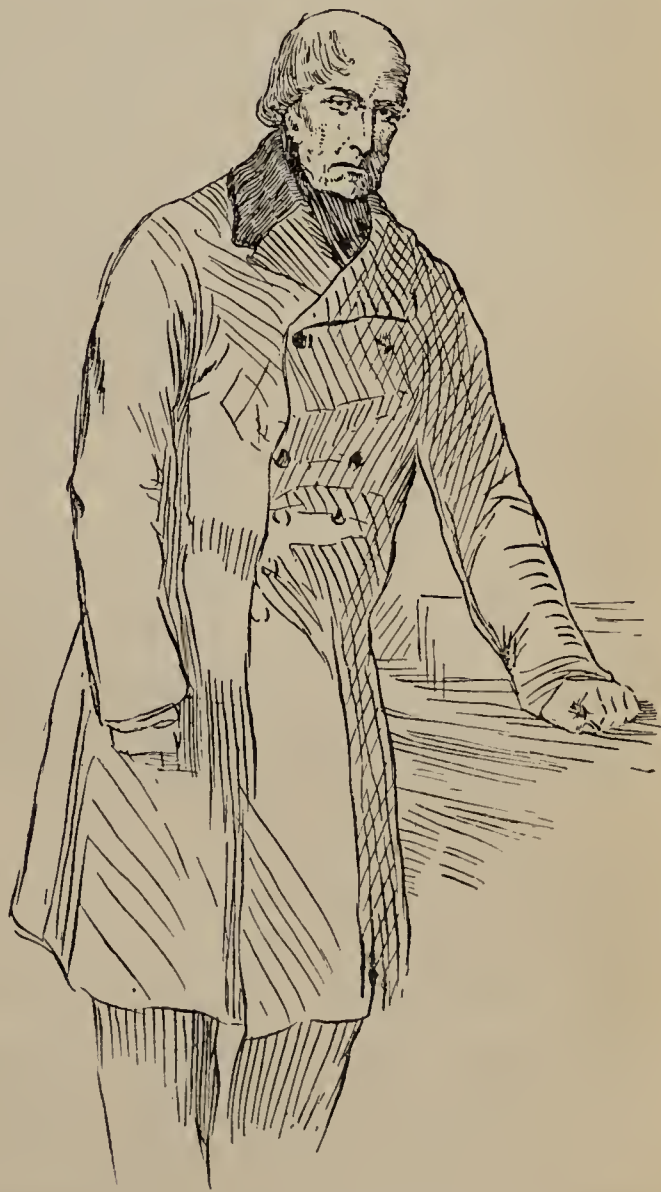
## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE PALMERSTONIAN ERA

#### I

#### THE CRIMEAN WAR

THE term coalition is one which until the twentieth century had a perfectly clear meaning. It meant not a combination of parties in Parliament in support of a ministry whose members are drawn from the ranks of one party, but the combination in a single ministry of members drawn from the ranks of different parties. The Liberal Government formed by Lord John Russell in 1846 depended upon the support of the Peelites, as the Melbourne ministry before had virtually been established by a compact with O'Connell. Lord Aberdeen's ministry was what they were not, a coalition ministry in the correct sense of the term, because the ministers were drawn from the ranks of two parties, the Peelites and the Liberals. Its chief, Lord Aberdeen, was a Peelite, so was its Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gladstone. Palmerston was not allowed to return to the Foreign Office but had to be contented with the post of Home Secretary; he was in fact distinctly antagonistic to Aberdeen, who was strongly opposed to assuming anything like an aggressive attitude in foreign affairs. By the not unfamiliar irony of politics Aberdeen was the one minister under whose leadership the British Empire has been involved in a European war since Waterloo. Palmerston's old place was actually taken at first by Lord John Russell.



The Earl of Aberdeen.

[From a sketch made in the House of Lords  
in 1854.]

The year 1853 was notable for the first Gladstone budget, in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer advanced along the lines of Free Trade.



Duties upon some two hundred and seventy articles were either reduced or removed. But in a very short time it became evident that foreign not domestic affairs were to absorb public attention.

Early in the year, Nicholas I., the Tsar of Russia, expressed to the British ambassador his conviction that the Turkish Empire was "a very sick man," very near to dissolution. Russia and Britain ought to be agreed upon a policy when that contingency should arise; and if Britain wanted Egypt and Crete for her share he should not object. Britain did not receive the proposal with any favour; she had no desire to see Russia in possession of Constantinople, with an unlimited fleet in the Black Sea ready to pass through the Dardanelles into the Mediterranean whenever it might suit her. She adhered to the policy of maintaining the integrity of the Turkish Empire, a fact which Nicholas failed to grasp. It was evidently his intention to hasten the dissolution which he had persuaded himself to regard as inevitable, and he found his opportunity in the differences between the Greek and Latin Christian Churches in Palestine.

France had a traditional and purely sentimental theory that she was the protector of Latin Christianity in the East; Russia had a traditional and exceedingly practical theory that she was the protector of Christians in general, but particularly those of the Greek Church. Louis Napoleon had just made himself Emperor of the French, and it was necessary for him to justify his position in the eyes of France and of the world by an active assertion of French claims. When Greeks and Latins quarrelled over points of precedence, Nicholas on one side and Napoleon III. on the other brought pressure to bear upon the Porte. The Porte tried to satisfy both, and succeeded in pleasing neither, with the result that the Tsar in effect put forward a claim to be formally recognised as the protector over all the Christian subjects of the Porte. The Porte refused the demand, which no sovereign state could possibly have tolerated, whereupon Russian troops crossed the river Pruth and occupied the trans-Danubian principalities. Hostilities were delayed by an attempt on the part of the Western powers to effect a pacification. They addressed a joint note to Russia and Turkey. Russia accepted it, but Turkey pointed out that it might be interpreted as confirming the Tsar's most extravagant demands. The Powers, who had no such intention, thereupon withdrew the note, Turkey demanded the evacuation of the Danubian provinces, Russia did not move, and at the end of October 1853 the two countries were technically at war.

Now after the episode of the "sick man" it was impossible for the British Government to doubt that Russia was bent on her programme of the partition of the Turkish Empire, according to the precedent of the partition of Poland. The Tsar, on the other hand, was comfortably convinced that Britain was wholly given over to commercial pursuits and would, at any rate, stop short of armed intervention, a view which he might not have taken had Palmerston been at the Foreign Office, where Russell's place had been taken by Lord Clarendon, Russell himself being



occupied at the conferences of the Powers. The French Emperor, however, was in hearty co-operation with the British Government, and was perhaps rather eager for war than otherwise, since military glory was almost a necessity to the imperial successor of the first Napoleon.

In October the British and French fleets were ordered to the Bosphorus to protect their national interests; Turkey declared war upon Russia, and the Tsar announced that he was merely holding the trans-Danube principalities as a material guarantee, and would not take the offensive against Turkey. Almost immediately afterwards the Russian Black Sea Fleet fell upon and annihilated a Turkish squadron lying in the Turkish harbour of Sinope. Popular indignation in England and France rose high, and Aberdeen was forced to consent to the occupation of the Black Sea by the joint fleets. It can hardly be doubted that the extremely pacific language adopted by the Prime Minister had encouraged the Tsar in the conviction that Great Britain might be relied upon not to declare war.

In the meantime the Turks had crossed the Danube and had achieved some definite successes. In February (1854) France and Britain, who had reason to expect support from Austria but did not wait for her joint action, sent to Russia a demand for the evacuation of the principalities; and the rejection of the demand was followed at the end of March by the declaration of war. The position seemed to point clearly to an approaching campaign on the Danube. In that expectation the forces of the allies were conveyed to Varna. The situation, however, was changed by the intervention of Austria, which, although she did not actually declare war, induced Russia to withdraw from the principalities. This was enough for Austria, but not for Britain and France. It was universally felt that the retirement of the Powers would still leave Russia free to choose her own opportunity for striking at Turkey. It was imperative to strike a blow which would enable the Powers to dictate terms giving the necessary security. The strength of the Russians in the Black Sea depended on their position at Sevastopol in the Crimea, and a campaign in the Crimea was resolved upon.

Unfortunately it was not anticipated that there would be any necessity



The Crimean Peninsula.



for a winter campaign. Had it been possible to carry out the plan at the moment when it was first mooted by Lord Palmerston, in June, it is probable that Sevastopol would have fallen at once; but transport difficulties and cholera intervened, and it was not till the second week of September that the French and British forces landed in the Crimea, at a point some thirty miles to the north of Sevastopol, in the Bay of Eupatoria. The British, commanded by Lord Raglan, numbered something less than twenty-five thousand men, the French force, under Marshal St. Arnaud, being slightly larger. The advance of the force was blocked by the Russians on the river Alma. After a hard fight, of which the British bore the brunt, the Russians were driven back in rout, but owing to the opposition of the French Marshal the pursuit was not pressed. When the army did advance Lord Raglan again yielded to St. Arnaud, and



The British forces marching to the attack at the Battle of the Alma, September 20, 1854.

[After a sketch made from a battleship stationed in the river during the battle.]

instead of making an immediate attack on the north side of Sevastopol, the allies marched round and took up their position at Balaclava.

For the third time the British yielded to the French, who objected to an immediate attack, and the allies prepared themselves to lay siege to Sevastopol on the southern side, the British lying on the east of the French, and therefore being in the more dangerous position. For the Russian general, Menschikoff, had withdrawn into the interior to secure his communications, not into the fortress, and any attack from him would fall upon the British. His communications with Sevastopol were also open, the allied force not being sufficiently large to effect a complete investment. The delay in attack enabled the Russian, or rather German, engineer, Todleben, to strengthen the defences, a work accomplished with extraordinary skill and rapidity; while the harbour had been protected from the operations of the allied fleet by sinking Russian ships in the entrance. The actual garrison consisted mainly of the sailors from the Russian fleet.



The general result was that a great bombardment was opened on October 17th and was maintained for a week, but only to prove that Sevastopol would not fall without a prolonged siege. On the 25th the Russians attempted to relieve the fortress by seizing the port of Balaclava, on which the British were dependent for their supplies. The attempt was foiled mainly by the magnificent charge of the Heavy Brigade, which shattered and rolled back an advancing column of Russians of five times their own numbers. But the splendid action of the Heavy Brigade, crowned as it was by triumphant success, has been eclipsed in the minds of men by the famous charge of the Light Brigade, as futile and purposeless as it was heroic. Under a misapprehension of orders received from the general, Lord Lucan, in command of the cavalry, entirely against his own judgment, ordered the Light Brigade of six hundred men to charge through a deadly storm of fire upon a distant Russian battery. The order was obeyed. The six hundred charged to the guns, carried them, and then the survivors rode back again—"all that was left of them."

Ten days later Menschikoff again attacked the British position at Inkermann. The attack was made in the early morning in a thick mist. As a consequence of the conditions the battle resolved itself into one in which groups of soldiers fought independently in detached parties not knowing what was going on in other parts of the field. It was

a soldiers' battle, fought and won by the sheer obstinate valour of the men, unaided by tactical skill or science on the part of the officers, for which there was literally no opportunity. By downright valour and discipline the British won and drove off the hosts of the Russians.

After Inkermann the army settled down to the long horrors of the winter siege which have become a proverb. The campaign had been entered upon with no expectation that it would be prolonged through the winter, and with no preparations for that contingency. The home organisation failed disastrously in providing supplies; even those which reached Balaclava in the first instance were destroyed in a gale before they could be disembarked. Those which arrived later could only with extreme difficulty be carried to the front. The criminality of contractors from whom the supplies were obtained made matters infinitely worse. The storm of public indignation which was aroused compelled Aberdeen to resign, and the nation demanded that Palmerston should be called to the position of Prime Minister. Fresh vigour was imparted to the administration; the system was reorganised, and the conditions improved rapidly



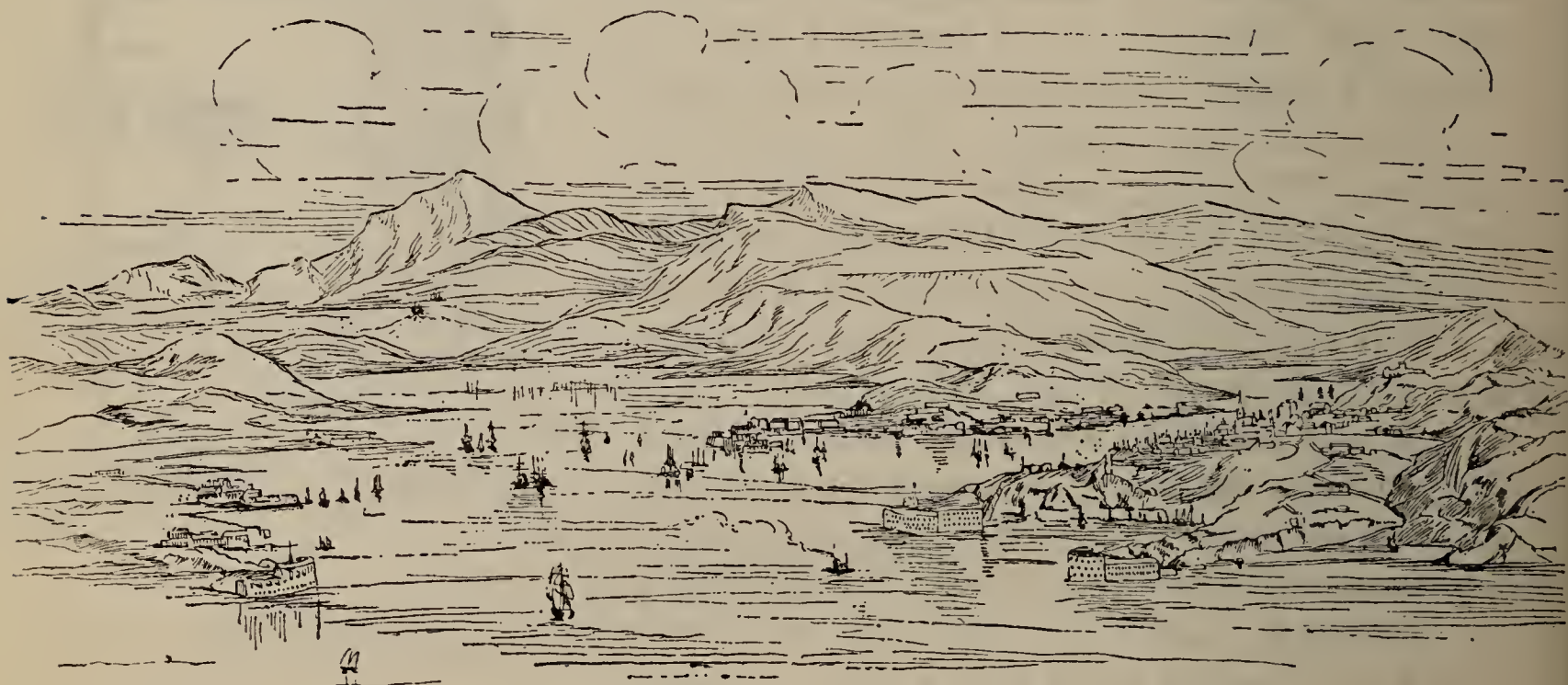
Lord Raglan.

[From a drawing by Edward Armitage in 1854.]



with the advance of the spring. But perhaps the most notable feature in the improvements was due to the initiative of Miss Florence Nightingale and her heroic staff of nurses, to which has been due the whole new modern conception of the treatment of the sick and wounded in war.

A conference of the Powers was summoned in March; it came to nothing; but, when Sevastopol fell in September, peace negotiations were renewed, and in March 1856 the Powers signed the Treaty of Paris. Even then Britain would hardly have obtained by the treaty the security against Russian aggression for the sake of which she had entered upon the war, but for the resolute attitude of Palmerston and Clarendon, who was still Foreign Secretary. The Emperor of the French had won the military prestige which was more important to him than the curbing of Russia, and he was anxious for peace. The Austrian Emperor had owed a good



The Port and town of Sevastopol, showing the Forts, in 1854.

[From a drawing made in 1854.]

deal to Russia in the past, and Russia was prepared to concede as much as the direct Austrian interests demanded. It was only by making it clear that Britain was prepared to carry on the war single-handed if necessary, that Clarendon obtained a satisfactory treaty. The Black Sea was neutralised; it was to be open to commerce, but the Russians were to be allowed to have only six ships of war upon it. All disputes between the Porte and any of the Powers which signed the treaty were to be referred to the joint decision of the signatory Powers. All conquests were to be restored, and the Sultan was again pledged to carry out the engagements which he had made as to the treatment of his Christian subjects. The trans-Danube principalities were to be in effect autonomous but under Turkish suzerainty. The British conceded sundry points which they had hitherto upheld with regard to maritime law in time of war; the goods of neutrals and goods carried under a neutral flag, with the exception of actual contraband of war, were to be exempt from capture. But



blockades, to be technically recognised, must be actually effective, and privateering was to be abolished.

Apart from the retirement of the Peelites, including Gladstone, when Palmerston's administration was formed, the only political event of domestic importance at this time was an unsuccessful attempt to revive the creation of Life Peerages. Had the attempt been successful, it would have become possible to modify very considerably the character of the House of Lords by introducing an increasing non-hereditary element. Baron Parke was to be raised to the peerage as Lord Wensleydale, but the form of the patent conveyed the peerage for his own life only. The Lords protested; the question was referred to a Committee of Privilege; and it was found that no such form had been used for four hundred years. The Government gave way and the ordinary form was adopted.

Though the war in Europe was brought to an end, two other minor wars were soon engaging a degree of public attention. The Shah of Persia, misled, like other orientals, as to the character of the Crimean War, and by Russian successes which attended it in Asia Minor, imagined that the British power was collapsing and that the Russian star was in the ascendant. Therefore once more he attacked Afghanistan and captured Herat. Lord Auckland's blunder, however, was not repeated; the British came to the aid of Dost Mohammed, and an expedition to the Persian Gulf under the command of Sir James Outram very soon brought the Shah to reason. He retired from Afghanistan, promised not to interfere with it again, and accepted Britain as arbitrator in any dispute which might arise between himself and the Russians. The British action also had the valuable effect of securing the confidence and loyalty of the Amir at Kabul. But the necessity for the Persian expedition was unfortunate, because it withdrew white troops from India at the moment when a grave and unsuspected crisis was impending.

Almost at the same moment the country became involved in complications with China. A collision some years before, arising out of the opium traffic, had resulted in a small war terminated in 1842 by the Treaty of Nankin, under which Hong-Kong had been ceded to the British. In 1856, a Chinese vessel called the *Arrow*, commanded by an Englishman and flying the British flag, was seized by the Chinese authority at Canton, and her crew were carried off on a charge of piracy. On the doubtful assumption that the *Arrow* was a British vessel, the Chinese were bound by treaty to hand over the crews to the British authority at Hong-Kong for the investigation of the case. The Chinese refused to do so. Sir John Bowring at Hong-Kong summoned the British squadron to coerce the Chinese. Palmerston supported his action in Parliament, and the hostilities developed into open war. The high-handed action of the Government was seized upon both by the formal Opposition and by the advanced Liberals, who disliked Palmerston's aggressiveness, as providing a ground for attacking the ministry. Palmerston, however, appealed to the country,



finding his actual position in parliament untenable, and the country returned him to power with a decisive majority. But the operations against China were delayed by the diversion of the expedition to the support of the British Government in India, which in the early summer of 1857 was plunged into the great catastrophe of the Sepoy Mutiny.

## II

## DALHOUSIE AND THE SEPOY REVOLT

Great men of the highest rank have been numbered among the British Governors-General of India ; brilliant men who might have achieved greatness but failed to do so ; masterful men whose successes were achieved by methods which were sometimes questionable ; strong men who went their way wisely and quietly, whose names the British public has almost forgotten. But in the whole series from Warren Hastings himself to the distinguished statesmen who are still living among us to-day there is no figure more remarkable than that of the man who left India at the beginning of 1856 after eight years of strenuous rule.

Two only among the great Governors-General, Wellesley and Dalhousie, have been guided by the conviction that it was desirable to seize every opportunity to bring native states under direct British dominion. All have recognised the necessity for asserting British influence and British control, but all the rest have done so with a distinct preference for maintaining the government of the native dynasty if it were practicable to do so. Dalhousie and Wellesley alone preferred on principle to substitute direct British dominion wherever it was possible to do so without positive injustice. The most extensive annexations were indeed those for which Lord Hastings was responsible ; but in his case there had been no alternative ; they were necessitated by the Maratha War. Wellesley had proceeded mainly by the method of subsidiary alliances, and in the case of Arcot by the ejection of a dynasty which had proved itself hopelessly unfit to govern.

Dalhousie now added to the British dominion by the conquest and annexation of the Punjab as already narrated, and, somewhat against his will, by the conquest and annexation of a great part of Burmah. In both cases the war was not of his making, and the annexation was bound to follow ; but the case was very different in sundry other cases, where it may be laid down with certainty that Dalhousie's predecessors would not have annexed at all. Most of them were examples of "escheat" ; that is to say, the territories passed to the paramount power, the suzerain, by lapse or failure of heirs, a process familiar alike to Western and to Indian law. The most prominent instance was that of Nagpur, where Lord Hastings in similar circumstances had not annexed but had preserved the native







But he went further than this in other cases. It had been customary for a Rajah, failing heirs of his body, to adopt a successor in accordance with Hindu law. The paramount power, whether the Moguls or the British, had never admitted an obligation to recognise adoption as conveying a title to the throne, but had habitually recognised it as a matter of grace. At Satara, Jhansi, and elsewhere Dalhousie refused to sanction adoption, and annexation by lapse was the necessary result. No one could dispute either the legality of his action or the immensely superior character of the administration by the British; but intense uneasiness was created among all the native dynasties who saw that a continuation of the process would gradually absorb the whole of India under direct British dominion. The final annexation was that of Oudh, but for a different reason—the persistent maladministration by the reigning Mohammedan dynasty in spite of repeated warnings. Here, however, the responsibility did not rest with Dalhousie, who had recommended a different course; and he had himself left India when the annexation was actually carried out in accordance with instructions from England.

Dalhousie during his term of office greatly extended the system of education, carried out immense public works, introduced the telegraph, initiated railway construction, developed the material prosperity of the country, and completely mastered the disorderly elements. The Punjab in particular, first under Henry Lawrence and then under his brother John, was converted into an exceedingly prosperous and, as was presently proved, loyal province. But Dalhousie's system had produced an intense unrest beneath the surface; it had involved a large increase in the native army, while, in spite of his own protests, this had been accompanied by a reduction in the number of the white troops. His masterfulness and his personal hold upon every branch of the administration had taught many of the higher officials to look to headquarters for direction instead of being prepared to take a vigorous initiative themselves; and thus Dalhousie's powerful rule even by its own efficiency and progressiveness prepared the way for the cataclysm which followed.

The mutiny is apt to be regarded outside of India as a somewhat unintelligible phenomenon, the outcome in part of the arrogant attitude of the British towards the natives and in part of a panic because of what was called the Cartridge Incident. As a matter of fact the phenomenon is perfectly intelligible if we attempt to realise the whole situation. In the first place the government was lulled into a sense of perfect security by the completeness of its power demonstrated during the régime of Lord Dalhousie, and also by the consciousness of the material advantages that the peoples were reaping or would reap from the excellence of its administration. That sense of security provided the very best opportunity for those who wished to organise a revolt. There were two groups of natives who had a very strong inducement in their own history to overthrow the British power, the Mohammedans who had been the lords of India, and the



Marathas who believed that they would have been the lords of India but for the British. The available instrument of revolution was there in the sepoy army, if it could be persuaded that its own interests lay in the overthrow of British dominion. The government in its unconsciousness blindly played into the hands of agitators by giving them the opportunity of appealing to the superstitious or religious terrors of the soldiery; and it had alienated the Hindu princes, who would normally prefer a British to a Mohammedan or a Maratha ascendancy, by its new attitude on the adoption question. As for the population at large it had been accustomed for centuries to treat wars and revolutions like earthquakes and famines as inflictions to which it had to submit passively without dreaming of taking a direct part. The elements which were not thus fatalistically peaceful were precisely those which very much preferred anarchy to any orderly government, and especially such a government as that of the British. Finally, all over Hindustan from the borders of Bengal proper to the river Sutlej there were swarms of native regiments, while the white troops could be reckoned in hundreds. The salvation of the British lay in the fact that there was not and could not be any national organisation of India for their overthrow because there was not and never had been an Indian nation. The overthrow of the British could only be followed by an internecine struggle for supremacy among the different divisions and cross divisions into which India was broken up by races, religions, and dynasties. The Mohammedans were not going to fight for Hindu liberties or a Maratha supremacy. The Marathas were not going to fight for a Mogul supremacy. The Rajput princes were not going to fight either for Marathas or for Mussulmans. There could be no common aim except a merely destructive one. And so when the insurrection came it was the work mainly of the Mogul faction, and was joined only by such Hindu princes or chiefs as had a personal grudge against the British Government. The Nizam remained loyal, though he found it hard to keep his troops in restraint; Sindhia remained loyal, though it was only for a time that he succeeded in keeping his soldiers in check. The Rajputs and the Punjab remained loyal, and in the end the Sikhs, who were traditional enemies of the Moguls and detested the Hindustanis, rendered splendid service to the British. Even in Oudh the great landowners or *talukdars* stood resolutely aloof until after the back of the revolt had been broken.

The organisers then of the revolt, so far as it was organised at all, were a Mussulman faction on the one hand, who intended to reinstate the Mogul empire over India, and on the other Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the last Peishwa who had been deposed in 1819. The Nana looked upon himself as the hereditary head of the Marathas, and he cherished an intense personal grudge against the British Government because, while it left him great estates, it had not continued to him the immense pension which it had allowed his adoptive father for life. The Nana secretly fomented sedition, while the Mussulman conspirators directed their especial attention



to the army, utilising for that purpose the superstitions of the Hindu soldiery as well as the sympathies of the Mohammedans. An ancient prophecy was circulated which pronounced that the British *Raj* would end with its hundredth year, 1857. Hindus and Mohammedans alike could never rid themselves of a belief that the British intended by force or by trickery to make them all Christians, for which Mohammedan rulers had given ample precedents in the forcible conversion of Hindus to Mohammedanism. The Hindus had recently been disturbed by being ordered to



Nana Sahib.

[From a sketch made in 1857.]

serve in Burmah; for the Hindu who crosses the seas thereby loses his caste, a matter at least as serious to him as excommunication to a Roman Catholic. This alarm was increased by a proclamation issued by Lord Canning, soon after his arrival as Governor-General in 1856, announcing that in future all regiments would be liable to service across the sea. Then came the Cartridge Incident. A new rifle was adopted in which greased cartridges were used, the tips of which the sepoy had to bite. It was reported that the grease was made from the fat of cattle and pigs. To the Mussulman the pig is an unclean animal and to the Hindu the cow is a sacred one. The panic was not allayed even by the withdrawal of the first batch of cartridges and the public declaration that the grease employed would be free from the obnoxious ingredients.

The whole sepoy army throughout Hindustan was in a ferment. Regiments began here and there to mutiny; then on May 10, 1857, the whole of the regiments at Mirat, a great military station in the north-west provinces, mutinied, killed every European they could lay hands on, marched upon Delhi, and proclaimed the restoration of the Mogul. In the next few weeks nearly every sepoy regiment between Delhi and Patna had thrown off its allegiance though Allahabad was secured, and almost all the British with the few sepoys who remained loyal were shut up in the Lucknow Residency, or at Cawnpore or Agra, or were assembled on the Ridge outside Delhi besieging a mutineer force in that city which outnumbered the besiegers by at least five to one.

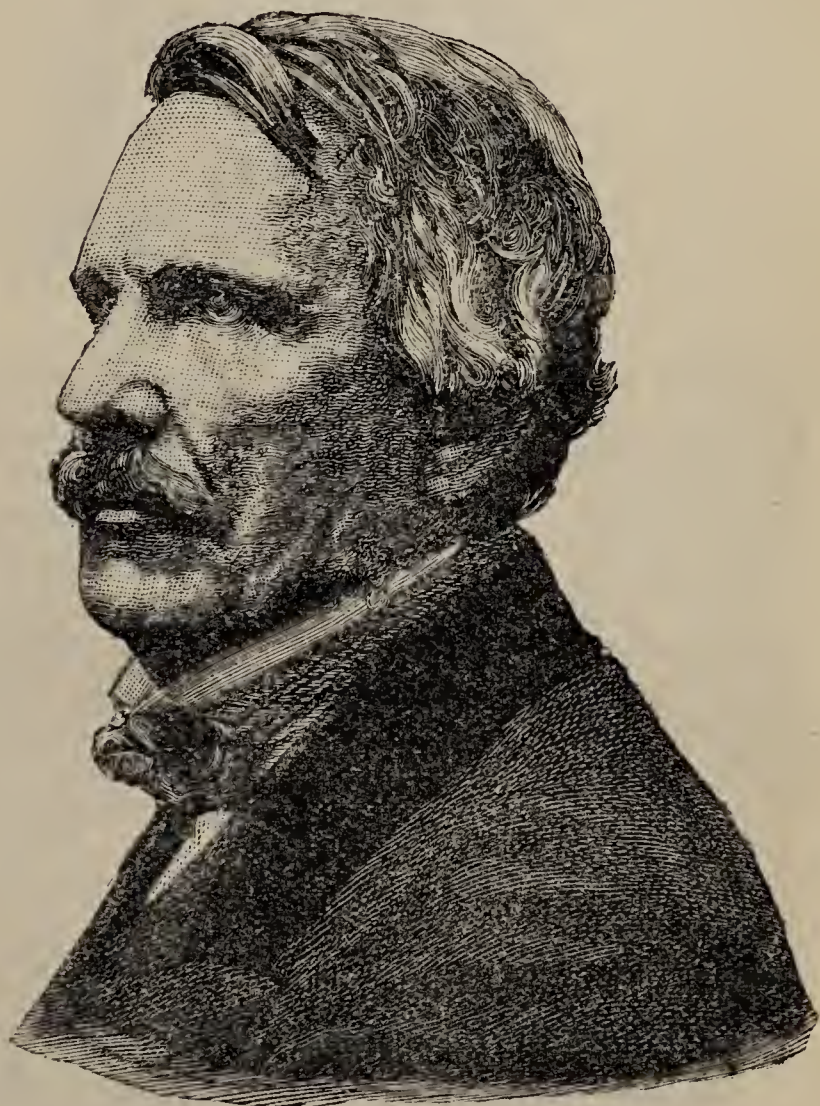
Before the end of June Cawnpore had fallen. There a mere handful of combatants and a large number of non-combatants, women and children, were besieged by Nana Sahib. For three weeks the defence was maintained till the place had become untenable. Then the defenders took the only course open to them and surrendered on terms. They were to be sent



down the river in safety to Allahabad. They were crowded into boats and pushed off into the stream. Then the native boatmen slipped overboard, and the Nana's men from the shore began to pour volleys into the helpless fugitives. The treacherous attack was followed up by a general massacre of the men, while the women and children were carried back to captivity in Cawnpore.

From the end of June to the second half of September the interest of the great struggle concentrated at three points, the siege of Delhi by the small force on the Ridge, the defence of the Lucknow Residency, and the efforts of Sir Henry Havelock to effect the relief of Lucknow. The mutineers were assembled in force at Delhi itself, in the city of Lucknow, and at Cawnpore, blocking the advance of the relieving force. Until the latter part of August the six thousand men on the Ridge before Delhi were kept mainly on the defensive. By that time John Lawrence had been able to despatch a flying column from the Punjab under General Nicholson to reinforce the besieging army, followed at the beginning of September by a siege train, without which it would have been impossible to attempt the actual capture of the mutineer stronghold. By the daring and skill of the engineer operations, actively conducted by Alexander Taylor, breaching batteries were at last brought to bear on September 11th; on the 14th the Kashmir gate was blown up and the ramparts of Delhi were stormed; day by day the British troops fought their way into the city, and on the 21st they were in full possession, with the Mogul himself in their hands, though a large portion of the mutineer force was on its retreat to Lucknow.

Meanwhile at Lucknow itself the Residency held out stubbornly. The character of the defence may be gathered from the fact that no fewer than twenty-five mines were detected and exploded by the vigilance of the garrison engineers in nine weeks. The force was never in actual danger of starvation, but the absolutely ceaseless strain was terrific; practically no news could be obtained from outside; a serious loss had been suffered by the death of Sir Henry Lawrence in the first week of the siege, and even the loyal sepoys, splendidly as they fought, were declaring that they must



Sir John Lawrence.



march out on October 1st unless relief had arrived, when Havelock and Outram broke their way in on September 25th and the pressing danger was averted.

Havelock had begun his march from Allahabad on July 7th with two thousand men all told, a quarter of whom were sepoys. The first object was to rescue the captives at Cawnpore, the next to advance through Oudh

to Lucknow. On the tenth day he reached Cawnpore. On one day he had fought two successive actions, and on this tenth day three. He was too late. When Nana Sahib found that nothing could stop Havelock, he deliberately butchered the women and children in cold blood and flung the bodies of his victims into a well. Never in our history had such a cry for vengeance arisen as when the story of that hideous crime was told.

Havelock crossed the Ganges and drove the rebels before him in one fight after another; but cholera had attacked his force, and now came news that down the river Dinapur had mutinied and on the west the Gwalior army was on the march. With-



The Memorial Well at Cawnpore.

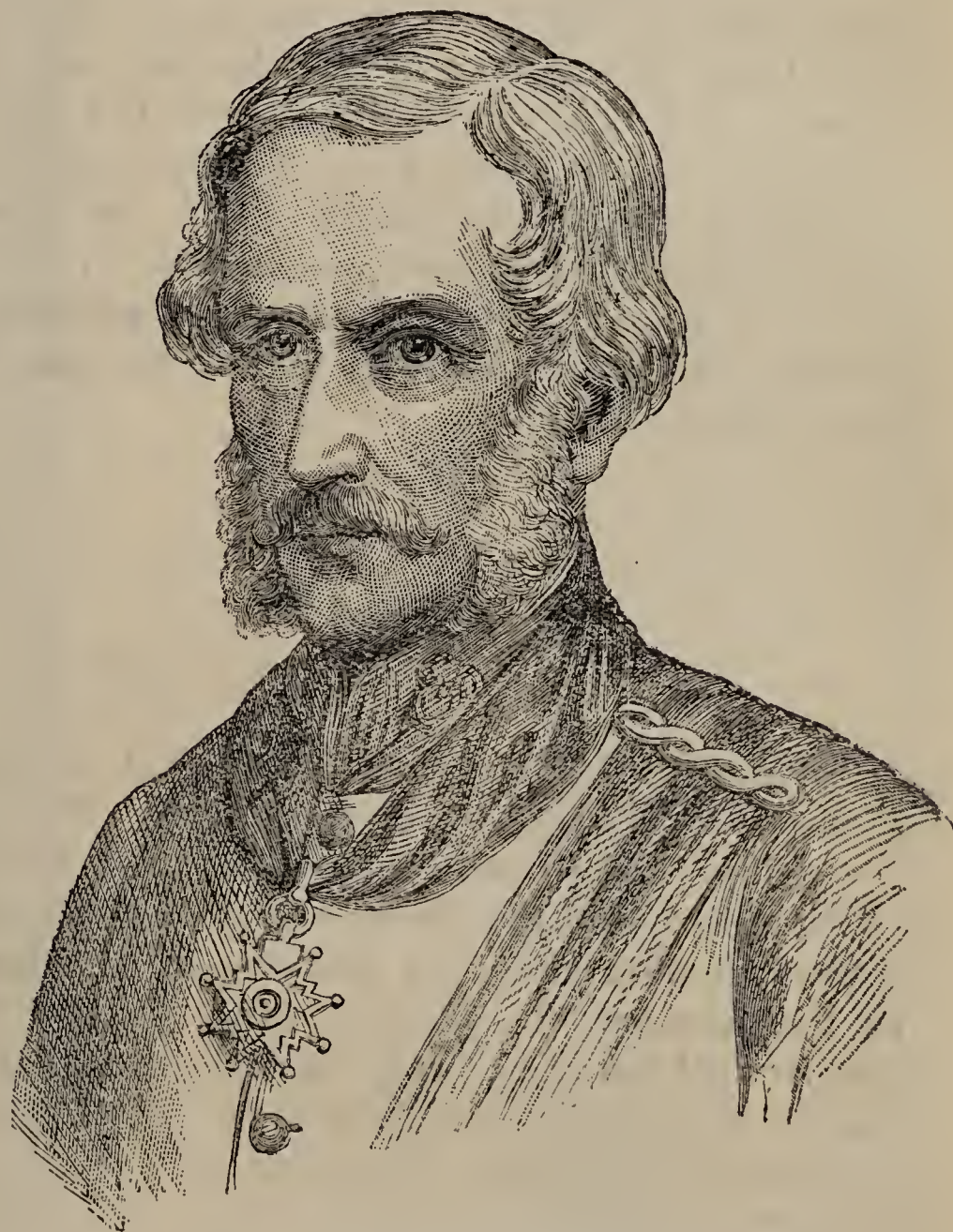
out some reinforcement it was impossible to advance, and he had to fall back on Cawnpore itself. It was an unfortunate necessity, for it made the people of Oudh imagine that the relief was abandoned and the triumph of the mutiny was assured, so that the talukdars no longer ventured to restrain their dependents from joining the insurgents.

Nevertheless reinforcements under Outram did arrive. On the day after the ramparts of Delhi were stormed, Havelock and Outram joined hands at Cawnpore, their whole force numbering three thousand men. Outram, the senior officer, would not deprive his heroic comrade of the glory of achieving the relief, but chose instead to serve as a volunteer under him. Ten days later they drove their way through the mutineer hosts, and the Lucknow Residency was secured.



The tide had been stemmed; now it turned. Sir Colin Campbell had already arrived in India to take the chief command. On November 17th he effected the actual relief of the Residency, the non-combatants were withdrawn, the position so long and so stubbornly defended was abandoned, and a strong garrison was placed instead under Outram in the neighbouring fort called the Alam Bagh. Havelock's work was already done; that typical Puritan hero passed away a few days after Sir Colin's arrival.

There was still plenty for the commander-in-chief to do. The city of Lucknow was still held by an immense force of mutineers. On the south-west the Gwalior army, under the one really capable mutineer leader, Tantia Topi, had joined Nana Sahib at Cawnpore. Not three weeks after the relief of the Residency, on December 6th, Campbell routed and split the enemy's force, driving the Nana over the Ganges in one direction and Tantia Topi over the Jumna in another. On March 17th Lucknow itself was captured after hard fighting. Meanwhile Sir Hugh Rose had been conducting a brilliant campaign in Central India, and at the beginning of April he put



Sir Henry Havelock.

[After the portrait by Frederick Goodall, R.A.]

Tantia Topi finally to rout and captured Jhansi, the last real stronghold of resistance, though many months still passed before the last embers of the great revolt were stamped out. Only in the final stage the Oudh talukdars had taken alarm at a proclamation issued by the Governor-General and had thrown themselves actively into the revolt when it was already hopeless.

No episode in our history has in it so much of tragedy, none more of heroism than the story of the Indian Mutiny, when the British fought with their backs to the wall shoulder to shoulder with loyal natives; when numbers of women showed a supreme fortitude in the day of supreme horror. But not the least heroic among many heroic figures was that



of Lord Canning, the Governor-General, who, in the midst of such a storm of wrath as never before or since has moved the British people, dared to face bitter obloquy, fierce denunciation, and angry ridicule, while he held fast to the principles of justice and refused to seek an indiscriminating revenge. The name of "Clemency" Canning, flung at him in scorn, will cling to him through the ages as a high title of honour.

The mutiny brought the end of the old order. It convinced the government at home that the time had definitely come for ending the old East India Company and transferring the government of India to the Crown. It was not British dominion but the dominion of the East India Company which lasted for a hundred years. The India Act of 1858 established the system under which the government of India is vested in the Viceroy and Council, responsible to the Secretary of State for India, who is a member of the ministry responsible to Parliament. The first Viceroy under the new régime was the last Governor-General under the old, Clemency Canning.

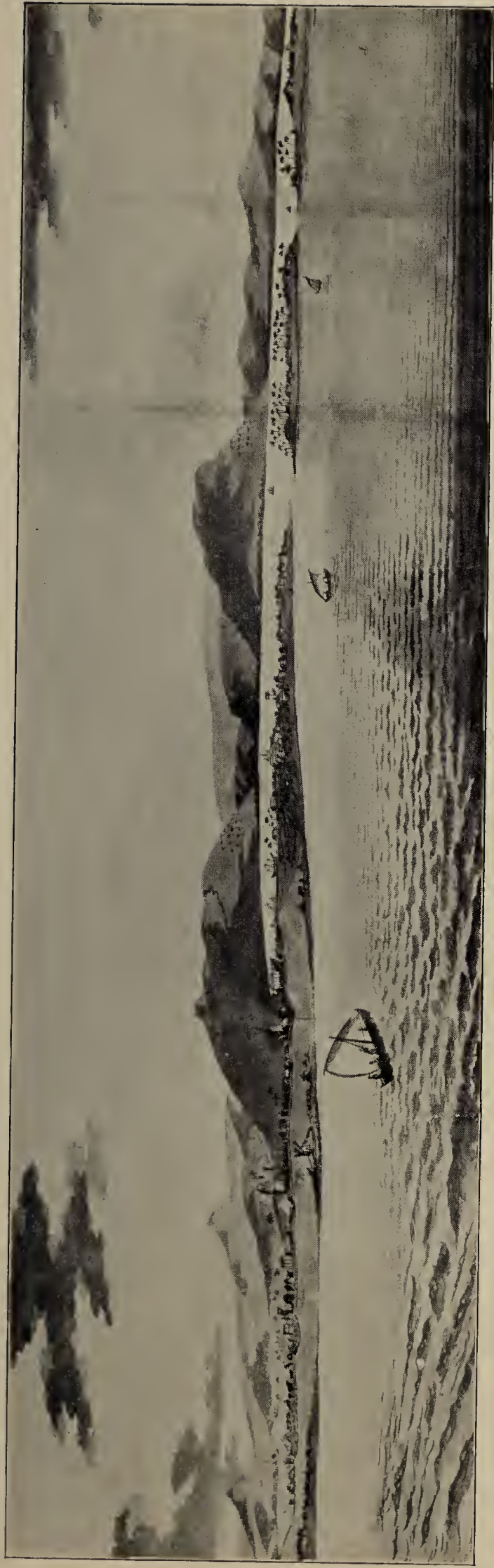
### III

#### PALMERSTON

While the Indian Mutiny was still in progress the Chinese war was brought apparently to a conclusion. The French were associated in it with the British because they had taken the opportunity to press demands of their own, and the Chinese governor, who defied the British, had issued a proclamation setting a price upon the heads of Frenchmen as well as Englishmen. In January 1858 Canton was captured. The Chinese government made no reply to peace proposals, so the Europeans attacked the Piho River, destroyed the forts which were intended to secure it, and advanced to Tien-tsin. There a treaty was concluded in June, by which the Chinese were forced to open some additional ports and the rights and powers of jurisdiction of the foreigners were defined.

The announcement of the peace did not fall to the Palmerston Government, which had come to a sudden and unexpected end in February. An attempt was made upon the life of the French Emperor by throwing bombs under his carriage. The principal conspirator was a man named Orsini, who had been a refugee in England while the plan was concocted. In France there was great excitement and a clamour for severe repressive measures in England. Language of a highly aggressive and bombastic character was used, which created corresponding irritation among the British. Palmerston and Clarendon were the last men to yield on points where British honour and British interests were concerned; but Palmerston desired to remain on good terms with the Emperor, and there was obvious reason at the bottom of the clamour in France when the right of asylum





THE TOWN FORT AND HARBOUR OF BOMBAY FROM MALABAR HILL IN 1800

From a print published in that year.



PART OF THE CITY OF BOMBAY AND BACK BAY, SEEN FROM MALABAR HILL, IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

From a photograph by Johnston and Hoffman.







in England for political refugees was utilised for the concoction of assassination plots. Lord Palmerston introduced what is known as the Conspiracy to Murder Bill. Conspiracy to murder was a capital offence in Ireland, but only a misdemeanour in England. The bill proposed to make it both in England and Ireland a felony punishable by transportation or imprisonment with hard labour, without respect to the particular country in which it was intended that the murder should be committed. But the country took it as a base submission to the threats of France, while advanced Liberals regarded it as a surrender of the right of asylum. The Government was defeated, and Palmerston resigned. For the second time Lord Derby took office, with Disraeli as the leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons.

The fall of the Palmerston ministry followed upon the introduction of a bill for transferring the government of India to the Crown. A new bill was now introduced, remarkably ingenious, but obviously open to the most hostile criticism; yet the Liberals, seriously shaken by the dissensions which had brought about the fall of the late administration, were by

no means anxious to turn the new Government out, though they could hardly have avoided voting against the bill. Both parties, then, accepted Russell's proposal that the bill should be withdrawn, the sense of the House taken upon a series of resolutions, and a bill then introduced embodying the views which had found favour, the scheme not being treated as a party question at all. The plan was successfully followed; the India Act was passed, and the government of the great dependency was transferred to the Crown.

For some years past there had been a growing inclination in the country to recognise the need of further parliamentary reform. Palmerston, however, with a considerable section of the Liberals, was by no means willing



Queen Victoria in 1857.

[From a pastel painting by Alexander Blaikley.]



to proceed further in the direction of democracy, and the question had more than once been shelved. But now the Conservatives were uneasily dominated by the personality of their brilliant leader in the House of Commons, Benjamin Disraeli. Disraeli was a man of ideas, to an extent exceedingly rare among British politicians. Those ideas were as remote as possible from the unimaginative conservatism, which views with alarm any possible change from that to which it has been accustomed, and remains blind to altering conditions, impervious to new facts. But he had thrown in his lot with the Conservative party; it was the instrument



Benjamin Disraeli.

[From an early portrait in the "Maclise Portrait Gallery."]

with which he had to work, and he had to educate it into acceptance of his leadership along paths which it would never have dreamt of treading on its own account. Disraeli was not afraid of democracy, because he believed in his own power of leadership and in popular support as the strongest basis on which government can rest. He saw now his opportunity for transforming the Conservatives into the popular party, and came forward as the advocate of parliamentary reform, which the Liberals had successfully relegated to the background.

But Disraeli had not yet realised that he was too ingenious both for the old Tories and for the country at large. The Government bill was full of subtle devices which, in the eyes of a suspicious Opposition, were intended only to bring into the enlarged franchise classes whose interest it would be to vote for the Conservatives, while shutting out those who were likely to vote Liberal; whereas to cautious

Conservatives it seemed fraught with democratic perils. The Reform Bill was thrown out, Lord Derby appealed to the country, and when the new Parliament met a vote of "no confidence" in the Government was immediately carried. Lord Derby resigned, Russell consented to serve under Palmerston with the charge of the Foreign Office, and all administration was formed which remained in power till Palmerston's death.

It was inevitable in the circumstances that the new Government should bring in a reform bill of its own. But as a matter of fact the country, the House, and the Cabinet were all apathetic. It was not difficult to find excuses for postponement, and the postponement was in effect a withdrawal. The question was once more shelved, and it was generally understood that it would not again be officially brought forward under Palmerston. The interest of domestic affairs during Palmerston's premiership centres almost entirely in the series of budgets by which Gladstone, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, carried to completion the system of Free Trade which logically



followed upon the financial policy of Sir Robert Peel. Incidentally one of Gladstone's finance bills foreshadowed the great collision between the two Houses of Parliament which was precipitated by another finance bill almost fifty years afterwards.

No effective movement was made in this direction in the 1859 budget, because the European situation was threatening, an increased expenditure was anticipated, and, instead of reducing taxation, Gladstone increased the income tax, a course which was held preferable to that of raising a loan. It was in effect becoming a recognised principle that the year's expenditure should be met out of the year's revenue whenever the country was not actually at war. But before the next budget was introduced in 1860 a commercial treaty was entered upon with France which was negotiated by Richard Cobden, the great apostle of Free Trade. Napoleon III. himself was a believer in the economic doctrines which now held the field in England; but neither in France nor speaking generally in the rest of Europe were those doctrines accepted. The treaty, therefore, went just as far as the emperor could venture. Cobden and the free-traders themselves believed in the commercial advantage of abolishing all tariffs, whether foreign countries adopted the same system or no; although they anticipated that foreign countries would adopt the system and that British commerce would gain all the more, an anticipation which has not been fulfilled. But in form the commercial treaty was one of reciprocity; that is, France agreed to abolish prohibitions and to reduce the duties on practically all British goods, while no preference was to be given to goods from any other country. On the other hand, Britain removed the tariff on very nearly all imported goods.

This principle was embodied in the budget of 1860. Of the four hundred and nineteen articles still on the schedule all but forty-eight were struck off. Between 1845 and 1859 more than seven hundred had been removed. As regards the forty-eight articles now remaining, none of the duties were either preferential or protective; that is to say, the whole of the proceeds went directly to the revenue, all producers competing on equal terms so far as British taxation was concerned. In spite of the greatly diminished cost of collection, it was estimated that the immediate loss to revenue would exceed two millions, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer looked forward to increased receipts in the future from articles on which the duty was reduced. For the time, therefore, the full amount of the duties on tea and sugar was retained and the income tax was placed at tenpence.

At this date a very substantial item in the national revenue was derived from the tax upon paper, which it was now proposed to abolish. This was a demand which the Radicals had been urging, because the high price of paper stood in the way of the publication of cheap literature. From the high Conservative point of view the publication of cheap literature appeared to be not desirable but dangerous, since it would enable the lucubrations of



agitators to be scattered broadcast. But, apart from this, it appeared at least questionable whether cheaper literature was needed more urgently than cheaper tea and sugar. Palmerston himself and many other Liberals viewed the proposal with anything but enthusiasm. The bill for the abolition of the paper duties was not incorporated with the rest of the financial proposals for the year in one bill, but stood by itself. It was passed in the House of Commons by a majority of fifty on the second reading, but on the third reading the majority dwindled to nine. The bill went up to the House of Lords. Since the days of the Stuarts the Lords had never interfered with a finance bill; but Lord Lyndhurst, a former Conservative Lord Chancellor, now led the opposition to the paper bill, laying it down as the law of the constitution that, while the Lords might not amend a finance bill, they had the right of rejecting it in its entirety, and were therefore free to reject this particular bill if they thought fit. The Opposition were victorious, and the Lords threw out the bill by a large majority.

It is curious to find that the Prime Minister expressed to the Queen his own personal conviction beforehand that if the Lords rejected the bill they would deserve well of the country, although the Cabinet, of which he was the head, was responsible for it. Extreme indignation, however, was aroused by the action of the Lords, and a violent collision was only averted when Palmerston introduced in the House of Commons a series of resolutions, claiming that the Commons alone had the right of controlling supplies, that the Lords' right of rejecting money bills was viewed with extreme jealousy by the Commons, and in effect that the remedy lay within the hands of the Commons themselves. Effect was given to the resolution by the Commons in the following year when the paper bill was incorporated with the rest of the budget. The Lords did not venture to throw out the budget in its entirety, and thus the abolition of the paper duties was carried. The right of the Lords to throw out a money bill was not again asserted until 1909.

The expansion of trade and the increase of revenue derived from the lowered duties were so remarkable that, in spite of increased expenditure on national defence, the income tax, the tea duties, and the sugar duties were all materially reduced in 1863 and 1864. The rapid increase in the national wealth may be realised from the fact that between 1842 and 1861 the assessments for income tax rose more than forty per cent.; and the increase in the last eight years had been more than three times as great as that in the first ten. It was this enormous advance which completely established the almost universal conviction which prevailed throughout the rest of the century that Protectionism was absolutely dead and could never be revived.

In the summer of 1865 Parliament was dissolved after a life of six years. Several successes in bye-elections had produced an impression that the Conservatives would come back to Parliament in greatly increased



numbers. But the anticipation was not fulfilled. Palmerston was still the most popular minister in the country; he commanded a great amount of support from Conservative sentiment, and his majority when the new Parliament met numbered more than sixty. But his reign was almost over. He was past eighty years of age; he had recently been suffering from ill-health; and in October he died, two days after his eighty-first birthday. The long truce was over; the battle of democracy was immediately to be renewed.

## IV

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The period of the Derby and Palmerston administrations was one of arrested activities at home. Foreign affairs were of a more exciting order.



The capture of the North Fort at Piho, August 1860.

[From a sketch made on the spot.]

We had affairs of our own to settle with the Chinese and Japanese, and also in the neighbourhood of the African Gold Coast, all of them involving military or naval operations. But also we had in Europe the exceedingly difficult task of endeavouring to assert ourselves effectively and at the same time avoiding war; while events in the United States provided an equally difficult problem in another hemisphere.

The Chinese trouble had not after all been settled by the Treaty of Tien-tsin since the Chinese government took no steps towards acting upon it. When the French and English envoys endeavoured, in accordance with the terms of the treaty, to make their way to Peking, they found the forts on the Piho rebuilt, the obstructions in the river restored, and their own passage refused. An attempt to carry the forts was repulsed; and the usual necessity in dealing with orientals followed, of despatching



an irresistible joint force of British and French. An ultimatum forwarded to Peking was rejected. The Piho forts were taken after hard fighting. A conference was arranged to take place near Peking, but the British officials who were sent forward to meet the Chinese commissioners were treacherously seized, some of them murdered, and others imprisoned. Lord Elgin, the British Plenipotentiary, demanded their release within three days; as they were not released the army advanced, and seized and sacked the celebrated "summer palace." The Chinese, however, now found resistance useless, the prisoners were released, the allies occupied Peking, and the Chinese submitted to the terms dictated. The previous treaty was ratified, a large indemnity paid, and the port of Tien-tsin was opened.

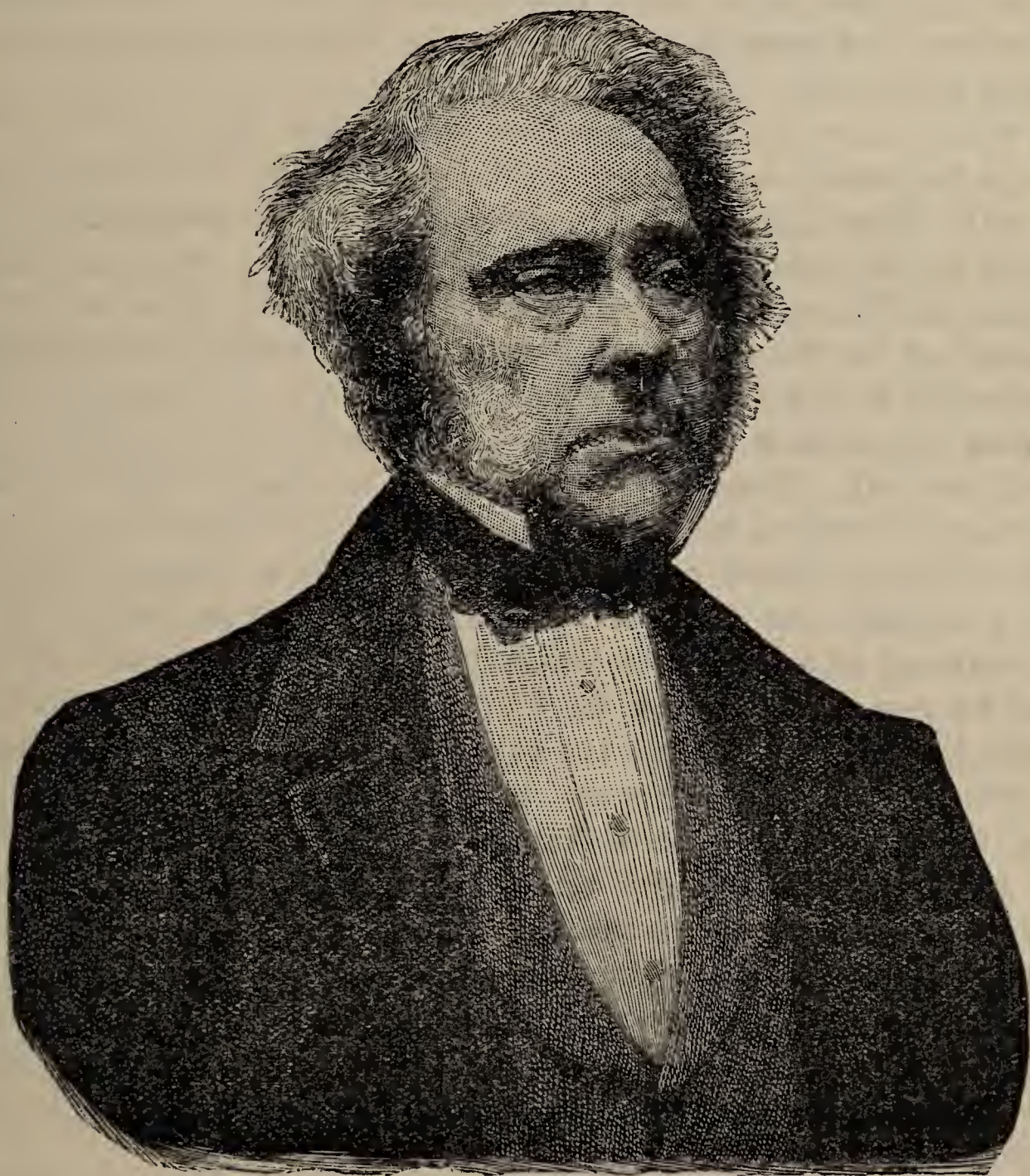
Japan had hitherto cut herself off from the outside world even more completely than China. Until 1858 the Dutch were the only foreigners admitted to trade, and that only under very restricted conditions. At that time, however, Lord Elgin procured a treaty of commerce under which five ports were opened to British subjects, and a British embassy and consular agents were admitted. Four years later a Japanese embassy visited England. But the Japanese were not yet reconciled to the presence of foreigners. A member of the British embassy at Yokohama was murdered. Compensation was demanded; the compensation was promised but not paid, and the ports were closed. The British admiral in those seas seized some Japanese ships at Kagosima. The batteries on the shore opened fire on the squadron, and the squadron bombarded Kagosima. Thereupon the Japanese gave way, and the ports were again opened.

The African affair referred to was an expedition from the Gold Coast against Ashanti, a somewhat futile demonstration against a savage native potentate who had been harrying friendly tribes. Such expeditions in peculiarly unhealthy regions are inevitably costly both in lives and in money, and, necessary though they are, always appear to be unproductive. The Ashanti expedition of 1864 was no exception to the general rule.

Meanwhile Europe and America kept Lord John Russell at the Foreign Office very fully occupied, and it is possible that, but for the restraining influence of the Queen and of the Prince Consort while he lived, the self-assertiveness of Russell and Palmerston might have involved the country in war. Grave European complications arose at the beginning of 1859 in Italy. The hopes of Italian nationalism centred in Victor Emmanuel, the King of Sardinia, and the first condition for Italian nationalism was the ending of the Austrian supremacy in North Italy. Victor Emmanuel's great minister, Cavour, secured the alliance of the French Emperor, and, after the failure of attempts to procure a European conference, a campaign was opened in Northern Italy in which the arms of the allies were successful. Napoleon, however, was playing for his own hand and stopped short of driving the Austrians out of the Peninsula. A temporary arrangement was arrived at, at the Treaty of Villafranca, by which Austria gave up Lombardy to Sardinia, Sardinia gave up Nice to France, and the former ducal dynasties were to



be restored in the Italian duchies. But the duchies entirely declined to accept the arrangement and were solidly determined to annex themselves to Sardinia. The British Government had refused to intervene, while displaying the strongest sympathy with the Italian movement, and by its attitude it probably prevented Prussia from lending aid to Austria. Now its attitude was again the decisive factor in the situation. British influence



Lord Palmerston.

[From a photograph.]

was exerted to the utmost to prevent any interference with the duchies in deciding their own fate.

Austria accepted the situation, and those of the duchies which desired it—which meant every one of them—were permitted to annex themselves to the kingdom of Northern Italy. France however demanded the cession to herself of Savoy, which Savoy itself favoured. But the whole performance fomented British distrust of Napoleon, whose selfish designs had been made unmistakably clear. Ostensibly the two Powers had been working together; but in fact the action of the British had thwarted the



Emperor's real intentions. The sudden insurrection of Sicily led by the warrior-hero of Italian liberty, Garibaldi, the overthrow of the Bourbon dynasty of Naples, the skilfully audacious management of the situation by Cavour, and the voluntary annexation of the Southern state to Sardinia, made Victor Emmanuel King of Italy, with the exception of Rome, which was still held by the Pope under French protection, and of Venetia, which was still an Austrian province. In these developments the attitude of the British Government once more went far towards preventing active intervention by any other of the Powers.

Very much less satisfactory, on the other hand, was the line taken by the Foreign Secretary, now raised to the peerage as Earl Russell, in connection with other European complications. The exceedingly intricate question of the sovereignty of Schleswig-Holstein, provinces attached to the kingdom of Denmark, became acute. Very few people indeed understood them, but to the British public it seemed that Prussia and Austria were combining to rob the little state of Denmark. It appeared that the Powers had guaranteed the integrity of Denmark, and popular sentiment was greatly excited. Russell remonstrated in a manner which was absurd, unless it was intended to back the remonstrance by force of arms, a course which the country would probably have endorsed. Already Russell had followed a similar line in addressing bellicose remonstrances to Russia on her treatment of an insurrection in Poland, when he had also induced Napoleon to remonstrate; but he had then permitted both the Tsar and the French Emperor to see that the remonstrance would not be backed by force. Both the Western Powers were snubbed for their pains. Now, therefore, when Russell invited Napoleon to join in bringing diplomatic pressure to bear upon Austria and Prussia on behalf of Denmark, the Emperor declined to subject himself to the risk of another affront, and for the second time Britain was placed in an ignominious position in the eyes of Europe. British prestige suffered severely, not from British non-intervention, but because non-intervention had been preceded by threatening language to which the minister who used it had never been prepared to give actual effect.

Altogether different was the tone adopted by the British Government in relation to the great civil war which broke out in the United States of America early in 1861. There the attitude assumed was one of determined neutrality. The Southern States declared their right to separate themselves from the union and form a distinct confederation. Their ostensible reason for doing so was the claim of the central government of the whole body to exercise over the separate states a larger control than it was entitled to in the eyes of those states. The immediate cause was the growing determination of the Northern States to abolish slavery. The Northern States denied the right of secession, claiming that the union was a "federal" one, in which case the attempt at separation is rebellion. The Southern States claimed that the Union was a "confederation" from which any member is



entitled to separate itself. Hence the names "Confederates" applied to the Southern States and "Federal" applied to the Northerners. The British Government declined to judge between them. Popular sentiment was violently divided, the passionate horror of slavery drawing one section of the public into fervent sympathy with the North, while the political advocacy of the right of self-government, which in fact had originally brought the United States into being, attracted the sympathies of another section to the Confederates. It must also be remarked that the sporting instincts of the British people were a powerful influence in favour of the South, since it was fighting against heavy odds.

In America, however, British neutrality was viewed with extreme indignation. That the indignation was unjustified is most effectively proved by the fact that North and South felt it in almost equal degree, each being firmly convinced that right was on its side and that it was monstrous for the British not to act on that assumption. The Northerners felt that American nationality was at stake, while to many of them it seemed impossible to question that every right-thinking man was bound to give his whole sympathies to the abolition of slavery. The Southerners felt that they were fighting for a principle of political freedom which ought to appeal to every Briton; they had been brought up to believe that slavery was a system emphatically sanctioned by Scripture, and half of them were much more alive to the condition of perfect contentment in which most of the slaves lived in the older states than to the ghastly abuses to which the whole system was liable. Therefore neither side forgave the British for not giving it whole-hearted and uncompromising support.

The attitude of neutrality was at first advantageous to the South, whose arms were the more successful, for the British Government recognised the South as belligerents not rebels. Sympathy with the South in England was increased by the affair of the *Trent*, which very nearly involved Great Britain in the war. The Southerners, having set up a government of their own, despatched two commissioners to England and France. The commissioners reached a neutral port and embarked on a British vessel, the *Trent*. The *Trent* was boarded by a Federal warship and the commissioners were carried off. A declaration of war was only averted when President Lincoln gave way to the demands of the British Government and released the commissioners.

On the other hand, the Federals had serious cause of complaint. It was found that ships were built and fitted out in British docks and sailed from British ports with apparently harmless intent, their real destination, to be employed as cruisers by the Confederates, having been carefully concealed. It was claimed that the British Government did not display due vigilance in preventing such action, the most notorious instance being that of the *Alabama*. The British Government flatly repudiated the charge, but when the war had terminated in favour of the North, immense claims were brought forward for damages in respect of the depredations wrought by the cruisers.



Another circumstance offered a very strong inducement to the British Government to render effective support to the South. The blockade of the Southern ports cut off the supplies of raw cotton on which the great Lancashire cotton industry was mainly dependent. The cotton famine deprived vast numbers of the Lancashire operatives of their means of livelihood. Immense credit was due to the Government and to the lavish generosity of the general public for the admirably organised efforts to relieve the terrible distress which resulted. But still higher praise is due to the operatives themselves for the splendid self-control they displayed. Had



The "Alabama."

[From a sketch by Charles W. Wyllie.]

they clamoured as they might well have done for a refusal to recognise the blockade of the Southern ports as efficient, so that the cotton ships might have sailed, the Government could hardly have resisted. But the Lancashire men, in spite of their own sufferings, would not urge a course which would help in the perpetuation of slavery, and they bore their deprivations with a noble fortitude which exhibited the character of the British working-man in the very highest light.

The resolute neutrality preserved from the beginning to the end of the war was bitterly resented for opposite reasons both by the North and by the South; and in that fact is to be found the very strongest testimony to the essential justice of the British attitude and to the dignified self-control displayed by the Palmerston Government.



## V

## AFTER PALMERSTON

The death of Palmerston involved little change in the ministry, but it restored Earl Russell to his old position as leader of the Liberal party, and it removed the great check upon the activities of the more advanced section of that party. Forty years before, Russell had already been conspicuous as the importunate advocate of parliamentary reform; and if he had declared himself satisfied with the great Reform Act, he had nevertheless for several years past been an advocate of further franchise extension. The question, however, was one on which it was almost certain the Liberals would split, since the Palmerstonian section was averse from any further democratic movement. But before the meeting of the Parliament which was destined to take up the question of reform, Irish affairs once more assumed a prominence which they had lost since Smith O'Brien's abortive insurrection in 1848.

The destitution of the Irish peasantry intensified by the famine had brought about an immense emigration to America. Under the then existing conditions of industry and agriculture the country had become over-populated; emigration relieved the strain, the excessive supply of labour in comparison with the actual demand was diminished, and the state of the country generally appeared to improve. But the emigrants departed to America with bitterness in their hearts, and the Irish in the United States became a new and disturbing factor in the Irish problem. In their eyes the root cause of the evils which had driven them into exile was the British dominion, and for many of them the release of their native country from what they regarded as a foreign yoke became a passion. In 1858 the Fenian Brotherhood was formed among them, a secret organisation having severance from England as its avowed aim and secret warfare as its avowed method, since open war was out of the question and force was regarded as the sole possible instrument for achieving the end in view. The strength of the movement lay in America, for it was essentially political, neither agrarian nor religious, appealing very little to the Irish peasant and not at all to the Irish priest. And the organisation gathered a new strength from the American Civil War. Irishmen fought in the ranks on both sides, and learnt something of discipline and of military organisation; and the leaders were not without hope that the hostility to the British which had been aroused in America might be utilised to further their schemes.

Secret societies, however, rarely remain for long exempt from the activities of informers. Acting upon information, the Government in Ireland suddenly arrested a number of the Fenian ringleaders and seized their papers. They were condemned to long terms of imprisonment, and



the widespread character of the conspiracy was revealed. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, numerous other arrests were made, there was a hasty exodus of Fenians, and the United States Government dashed all hopes of assistance from that quarter by suppressing raids over the Canadian frontier.

In March Lord Russell's Reform Bill was introduced by Gladstone, who had succeeded Palmerston as leader of the Liberals in the House of Commons. The county franchise was to be lowered to £14 and the borough franchise to £7. It was estimated that some four hundred thousand voters would thus be added to the register. The bill went far enough to excite the alarm of the Conservative element, but not far enough to arouse enthusiasm on the other side. It was opposed by a section of the Liberals who were nicknamed the "Adullamites" by John Bright, who likened them to the followers of the outlawed David. The bill passed its second reading by a majority of only five, and an adverse vote in committee induced the Government to resign. For the third time Lord Derby took office, with Disraeli as his Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons.

The introduction of the Reform Bill had been received in the country with apparent apathy, but its rejection aroused a surprising amount of resentment. A great Reform demonstration was announced to be held in Hyde Park. At the last moment the authorities closed the park gates, and it was not surprising that the mob which assembled broke down the park railings and behaved with considerable violence and disorderliness, though no very serious damage was done and no lives were lost. A vigorous oratorical campaign was opened in the country, and the result was that when Parliament met again at the beginning of 1867 Disraeli had persuaded his colleagues that they must carry a Reform Bill themselves.

It was Disraeli's intention to follow the precedent of the India Act, removing the bill out of the sphere of party politics and proceeding by resolutions on which a bill was ultimately to be based. The plan failed. The central idea of Disraeli's scheme was to admit working-men to the franchise, but to check the power given them through their numerical preponderance by multiplying the votes of the educated and propertied classes. The last bill had been defeated on an adverse motion substituting rating for rental as the basis of qualification for the franchise, a difference of which the main effect was to exclude the "compound householder," the man who in paying his rent compounded for the rates which were paid not by him but by the landlord. Accordingly the resolutions for the new bill set £6 in the boroughs and £20 in the counties, on the rating basis, as the qualification; but sundry "fancy franchises" were added giving a separate vote apart from property qualification to ministers of religion, university graduates, and any one who had £30 in the savings bank, £50 in the funds, or who paid 20s. or more of income tax. The reception of the resolutions was unfavourable; they were thereupon withdrawn under



promise that a fresh bill should be formulated, and some Conservative stalwarts retired from the ministry, most notable among whom was Lord Cranborne, who was destined at a later day, as Marquess of Salisbury, to lead the Conservative party.

The new bill when introduced proved to be more democratic than the resolutions. It proposed to give the franchise in the boroughs to all householders who paid their own rates, with a fifteen pound rating franchise in the counties. But the fancy franchises remained, with the further proviso that they conferred an extra vote on those persons possessing them who were otherwise qualified to vote as householders. The bill as it stood was acceptable neither to the advanced Liberals nor to the cautious Conservatives. Lord Derby himself described it as a "leap in the dark." To Disraeli it was a party bid for popular favour, intended, as Derby phrased it, to "dish the Whigs"; but at the same time it expressed his own genuine convictions first that the people ought to be admitted to a larger share of political power, and, secondly, that education and intelligence should be called in to counterbalance the mere counting of heads. In the eyes of Liberals the fancy franchises were of course a mere party move to increase the influence of Conservative voters. The one unmistakable fact about the bill was that it would not go through unless it was made acceptable to the Opposition, and the Opposition was by no means at one. A number of Liberals voted against Gladstone's amendment that there should be a five pound rating limit, and that above that limit the compound householder should have the vote. Gladstone however recovered his mastery of the party, and it would be difficult to say whether the Act which was finally passed was more his or Disraeli's. Double votes and the fancy franchises disappeared. In boroughs the householder and the £10 lodger were qualified after a year's residence. In the counties the qualification was lowered to £12. The compound householder difficulty was solved by an amendment which abolished compounding in parliamentary boroughs. No borough with a population of less than ten thousand was to have two members. The members thus removed were in part added to the county representation, nine new boroughs were created, and six large towns acquired an additional member. Corresponding but not identical Acts were afterwards passed for Scotland and Ireland. The grand practical effect of the whole was that the urban working-man acquired a vote but the agricultural labourer did not. The latter remained without the franchise till seventeen years later.

The Liberal Government had not succeeded in getting rid of the Fenian problem. The Derby administration found it necessary to maintain and to renew the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and at first that policy seemed to be sufficiently effective. Nevertheless, early in 1867 a series of sporadic insurrections took place in Ireland, apparently with the simple intention of keeping up a continual and ubiquitous disturbance; for the armed bands were always easily dispersed, nor was popular



sympathy expressed by the usual method, the refusal of juries to convict. The Fenians, however, were not content with their efforts in Ireland. Early in the year a plot for capturing the castle and military stores at Chester was frustrated, and in September a desperate attempt was made at Manchester to release by force a couple of Fenians who had been arrested actually on a charge of burglary. A police officer was killed, and consequently three of the men concerned were hanged, somewhat unfortunately, since it led to their glorification as the "Manchester Martyrs." Then came a desperate attempt to blow up a part of Clerkenwell gaol, resulting in the death of twelve persons and in injuries to some hundred more. Fenianism altogether failed to accomplish anything, and after the Clerkenwell affair it died out. But it was itself merely a symptom of the disaffection which had taken root not in Ireland itself but among the Irish in America, a disaffection which was still to play a serious part in the Irish problem.

At the beginning of 1868 Lord Derby, whose health was failing, retired. However uneasy the Conservatives might feel under the audacious guidance of Disraeli, there was no man in either House whose claims to the party leadership could for a moment be compared to his, and he now became Prime Minister. He had already achieved the passage of a democratic reform bill by a Conservative ministry, but only through repeated concessions to the Liberals. The Government held office under a tenure too precarious to last. It was perhaps the Fenian movement which established in the mind of Gladstone, the leader of the Opposition, the conviction that Irish unrest was to be removed by attacking its root causes, which in his view were the religious and agrarian difficulties. If these were removed it was still his conviction that the political grievance would be found to have no independent life. Ireland, therefore, was selected as the point of attack. Always a fervent Churchman, Gladstone until recently had been a strong upholder of all ecclesiastical claims. Latterly, however, he had spoken ominously concerning the position of the Church in Ireland, and he now brought forward resolutions in favour of Irish Disestablishment. The Government was defeated, but Disraeli's proposal, that the Scottish and Irish Acts consequent upon the English Reform Act should be passed in the summer and that there should be an autumn dissolution, was accepted. The appeal was made to the new constituencies in November, and the new constituencies returned the Liberals with a decisive majority of one hundred and twelve.

Since the death of Palmerston the policy of non-intervention in Europe had been followed on the same principles as before by both Governments, though with an avoidance of the indiscretions which had occasionally given it such an unfortunate colour. Austria and Prussia were left to fight out their struggle for supremacy in Germany in the brief but decisive Seven Weeks War of 1866; while the diplomacy of Lord Stanley at the Foreign Office was of material influence in averting the immediate danger



of a war between France and Prussia. Outside Europe the conduct of Theodore, the "Negus" of Abyssinia, in imprisoning sundry British officials and other residents, necessitated the despatch of an expedition to that country at the beginning of 1868. The command was given to Sir Robert Napier. The campaign was conducted with entire success. It was inglorious because the resistance offered by the enemy was merely futile, but the highest praise was due to the commander because it was conducted in an extremely difficult country, while the utmost rapidity of movement was essential in order to ensure the withdrawal of the forces before the summer. Napier's army was drawn from India, but it is not easy to perceive how the British Government justified itself in charging India with the cost of the expedition.

The reorganisation in India, in the years following the Mutiny, under Canning, Elgin, and Lawrence, cannot be adequately described without entering upon technicalities more fully than is possible in these pages. Certain points however may be noted. Dalhousie's policy of refusing to recognise adoptions was explicitly set aside. The Oudh talukdars found that the government was ready to make full allowance for the misapprehensions under which they had at the last revolted; their treatment was acknowledged by themselves as generous, and they became once more thoroughly loyal. All the princes who had remained faithful found their services amply recognised; and beyond the border Lord Lawrence laid down those principles of non-intervention and "masterly inactivity" in Afghanistan which were presently to be challenged by the advocates of what is called the Forward Policy. On the death of Dost Mohammed the various claimants to the succession were left to fight out their own quarrels, and it was not until all rivals had been crushed or expelled that the British Government definitely recognised the Amir Sher Ali as the friendly ruler of an independent state.

In the colonies the close of 1865 witnessed an unhappy episode in Jamaica. An insurrection of the black population was attributed largely to the inflammatory language used by a native proprietor and preacher, George William Gordon. The insurrection was sharply suppressed by Governor Eyre, whose previous record proved his natural inclination to deal sympathetically with native populations. Martial law was proclaimed and Gordon was arrested, sentenced by a court-martial, and put to death. The severity however with which the insurrection was suppressed, the numerous executions, and the floggings to which women as well as men were subjected, created intense indignation in England; while, on the other hand, there was a powerful party which insisted that the principles of government applicable to white races are not applicable to black populations, with whom severities are necessary which would be wantonly brutal if employed in a European community. On the whole, in spite of many great names in the list of those who headed the attack on the governor, public opinion condoned if it did not entirely endorse his action. All parties, it may be



said, agreed in principle that the rights of coloured races must be protected, while the supremacy of the white race must be maintained ; but there is an eternal antagonism over individual cases in which the two principles come into conflict.

One event of supreme importance in the history of the British Empire remains to be recorded here. By an Act in 1867, the British North America Act, the colonies were authorised to unite under a federal government. All the North American colonies with the exception of Newfoundland came into the new arrangement and formed the great Dominion of Canada, the separate colonies or states having their own governments for the control of their own affairs, while those which are the common concern of all were in the hands of the single central government. Thus began that system of associating the colonies into federated groups in which present-day Imperialism is finding the solution of the problem of combining self-government with imperial unity.

## VI

### MID-VICTORIAN

In the years which passed between 1852 and 1869 great events occupied public attention—the establishment of the Second Empire in France, the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, the Unification of Italy, the American Civil War, and the decisive contest between Austria and Prussia. They ended with the Act which transformed the British House of Commons, at the instance of a Conservative ministry, into a body representing a democratic instead of a bourgeois electorate. But they were years in which domestic progress flowed on and the tide of material prosperity rose higher and higher, undisturbed and unaided by any heroic legislation or startling innovations. No sweeping changes came over the face of the land ; no mechanical inventions broke in upon the consistent development of the established system of manufacture, of traffic and of commerce.

The great names which had come to the front in literature in the previous twenty years were still the leading names, though in poetry they were most notably reinforced by Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, and Rossetti, and among novelists by George Eliot and Charles Reade. Still more characteristic of the period, however, as finished expressions of its placid conventions, were the by no means profound works of Anthony Trollope and Charlotte Yonge. While poets and novelists accomplished work of the highest rank, and in work sometimes of a much lower order produced photographic pictures of the life and manners and customs of mid-Victorian upper middle-class life ; while Carlyle and Ruskin, each after his own inspiring, if occasionally erratic, fashion, upheld moral ideals to an age which presented itself to their eyes as drearily materialistic and hidebound





WINNIPEG IN 1870

In the background is Fort Garry. On this site now stands the Union Station of the Grand Trunk Railway. From a painting of 1870 in the possession of the Canadian Government.



WINNIPEG IN 1912

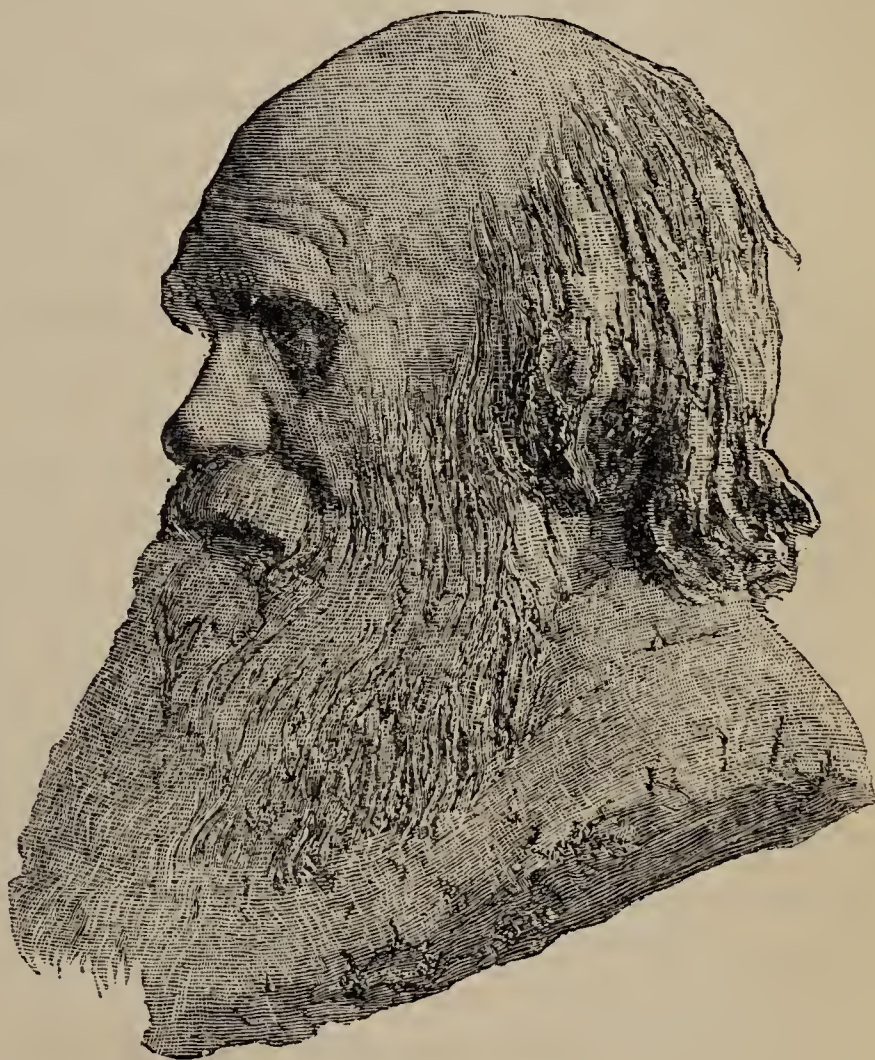
The building in foreground is the Bank of Montreal.







by conventions—the most distinctive intellectual work of the day was being accomplished in another field. At the beginning and at the end of the seventeenth century the achievements of Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton had marked epochs, turning points, in the history of human thought. Another such epoch was now marked by the publication in 1859 of the *Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin. Already the geologists had alarmed religious orthodoxy by their demonstrations of the world's antiquity, proofs that it had not been created precisely in the first week of the year 4004 B.C. The exact and literal interpretation of Scripture as an inspired record not only of spiritual truths but of material historical facts, a record of which no single word might be gainsaid, now suffered an infinitely more damaging blow from the biologists. An investigator of infinite patience, a whole-hearted seeker after truth, was able to place before the world a provisional demonstration that the infinitely varied forms of life in the world were not the outcome of a single creative act, but had been evolved through countless years from one infinitesimal primordial type. Man himself was but the most perfect type to which evolution had attained. Species had become differentiated



Charles Darwin.

[From a medallion by Alphonse Legros.]

by the transmission of inherited characteristics. If those characteristics rendered them better adapted to their environment they survived; if not, they perished. It appeared at first sight that if this theory were true the formulæ of orthodoxy must be false fundamentally. It was only by slow degrees that men realised the true significance of the doctrine of evolution and the moral and spiritual insignificance of the conventional beliefs which it displaced, just as they had taken a very long time to realise that the truth of Christianity was compatible with the truths of astronomy. Orthodoxy had to readjust its formulæ to the newly ascertained facts, though it presently discovered that the readjustment touched nothing fundamental. But the misapprehensions were not confined to the orthodox, and a sceptical philosophy was generated, based upon biology, of which the most brilliant popular exponent was Professor Huxley, while Herbert Spencer was its high priest.



If the principle of *laissez faire* in commerce was thoroughly established by Peel and carried to completion by Gladstone, its rejection in the relations between capital and labour was hardly less definite. The Factory Acts, that is to say, reasserted the old doctrine that the state was warranted in intervening for the sake of the public good even at a certain economic risk. The advocates of intervention, indeed, generally denied the economic risk, claiming that profits would not be diminished by the restrictions imposed; but at the bottom of the public support lay the conviction that the intervention would still be morally justified even if the profits of trade were reduced. The restrictions, however, on unqualified competition were applied with definite limitations which emphasised their origin as moral, not economic. They were employed exclusively for the protection first of children and then of women from excessive labour tending to the physical and moral deterioration of the race. Grown men must take care of themselves, and must be left to unqualified competition so far as the state was concerned.

The whole process of restriction, moreover, was tentative and experimental. It was at first brought to bear only on specific employments in which experimentation was comparatively easy, or where, as in the case of the collieries, the evils born of non-intervention were particularly flagrant. But it followed that during the succeeding years the experiment was extended to other trades and was carried further in the trades to which it applied. Thus textile factories were at first alone subject to its operation, but in the fifties and sixties other allied trades were brought within the compass of the Factory Acts, then trades such as pottery, which were not allied to them; and, finally, in 1867 the Factories and Workshops Act defined the factories where the regulations were applicable as covering all premises where more than fifty persons were employed on any manufacturing process. Also during these years there was an increasing disposition to impose regulations of a definitely sanitary character, and requiring the employers to fence their machinery and to take other precautions for protection against accidents. There were, no doubt, always employers who declared that every fresh restriction placed them at a disadvantage with the foreign competitor, but there was never any appearance that the British manufacturer failed to obtain adequate profits.

The men were left to themselves, and there was a steady advance of the new trade unionism exemplified by the Engineers' Society. The new unionism was not bellicose; nevertheless in 1859 there was another great contest between masters and men in the building trade. The strength of the men's organisation led the masters to resolve not merely to refuse to recognise the unions but to break them up at least as militant organisations. A local strike was met by a general lock-out. The struggle lasted for a long time; finally the men did not obtain the concessions for which they had originally struck, but, on the other hand, the masters were



obliged to withdraw their demand that the men should separate themselves from the unions.

Now the new unionism represented by the great societies may be said to have had a double aim—to enforce all round conditions which the most liberal masters were willing to concede, and to procure legislation which would strengthen their own hands. They did not want state regulation, but they wanted a legal status which would enable them to bargain more effectively. It was therefore in their interest to be recognised as law-abiding bodies. But there were many among the workmen who were not satisfied with what may be called constitutional methods. The prominently violent action of some of these minor unions, wholly opposed though it was to the spirit of the principal bodies, was naturally looked upon by the public as characteristic of the whole trade union movement. The result was that in 1867 there was a commission of enquiry which was eagerly courted by the leading unions. While the enquiry resulted in a report of a character immensely more favourable to the unions than had been generally anticipated, a judicial decision in the same year stamped them as illegal associations, which consequently had no power at law to protect their own funds from malversation. It thus became decisively clear that trade unions would in future be practically powerless until they acquired a recognised legal status. That was the work of the next period, when the Reform Bill had given the working man a parliamentary vote.

The year however also witnessed an Act which removed a serious inequality. Theoretically the law applied the same treatment to employers and employed, but in actual fact it did not. In the case of a contract between "master and servant," which covered contracts of service generally, the master who broke the contract could only be sued for damages, but the servant who did so committed not a civil but a criminal offence, consequently the latter could not give evidence in his own defence; he was liable to imprisonment, and might be tried before a justice of the peace, who, on such questions, could hardly be regarded as an unbiassed judge. The Masters and Servants Act, procured in effect by the action of certain northern trade unions, and passed by the Derby Government, remedied the worst features of the existing law in this respect.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

### DEMOCRACY

#### I

#### EUROPE

THE years of the last Russell and Derby administrations and the early years of the first Gladstone administration were marked by events on the Continent which almost amounted to a revolution of the European system, through Prussia's two great contests first with Austria and then with France. Those contests incidentally secured the completion of United Italy. To any one born within the last fifty years "Germany" means a consolidated German Empire wielding the most highly organised army in Europe, a military power which it is assumed that no other nation could defeat single-handed. In the popular mind Austria, however closely allied with the German Empire, is as completely distinct from it as Russia or France or Italy. The unity of Italy is taken for granted no less than the unity of Germany. Nevertheless, in 1865 a great section of Northern Italy was still a province of the Austrian Empire, while Germany was at best a confederation of independent states, among which Austria rather than Prussia still exercised a sort of presidency. To Austria, in fact, still clung the tradition of the so-called Holy Roman Empire, which had in effect been essentially Germanic ever since it was created by Charlemagne. Not till the days of Frederick the Great had the King of Prussia acquired among the German princes a position which made it possible to challenge the Austrian ascendancy. Never at all had there been a consolidated German Empire, a Germany standing as a united nation among the other nations of Europe. The creation of a united Germany was the work of Otto Von Bismarck, the great minister of William, King of Prussia, in association with the great soldier Moltke.

The name of Germany, then, like the name of Italy, was little more than a geographical expression covering a number of loosely associated Teutonic kingdoms and principalities, two of which ranked among the first-class Powers; while to one of these two, Austria, tradition assigned a sort of leadership. But of the Austrian Empire only a portion was Teutonic, the greater part of the dominion being either Slav or Magyar. Bismarck's great aim was to transform this loose association of German states into a solid unity; but in a United Germany there would be no room for Austria.



Prussia must be supreme, and she could not be supreme unless Austria were entirely excluded.

The first business, therefore, was to secure the ejection of Austria and the acceptance of Prussian ascendancy. There would have to be a war between Prussia and Austria, and Austria would have to be decisively beaten. The war, then, must be procured at the moment and under conditions which would ensure victory. No one outside Prussia knew the perfection with which the military machine was being organised. Bismarck timed his arrangements with consummate precision. The neutrality of the British and the Russians could be reckoned upon; that of France was secured through Napoleon's complete miscalculation of the odds. He anticipated that Prussia would be soundly beaten, that he would be able to intervene at the right moment to shield her from destruction, and that he would reap his reward on the Rhine. Italy was drawn into active participation, with Venetia—the completion of a united Italy—as her reward. In 1866 Austria was manoeuvred into a quarrel at the right moment, with a sufficient appearance of her being the aggressor, and war was declared. In Italy the Italians were defeated; but in Austria the brief Prussian campaign was absolutely decisive. The victory of Sadowa or Königgratz wrecked the Austrian army, and Bismarck was able to dictate his terms, which were not vindictive. Italy was rewarded with Venetia, Prussia annexed Hanover and some other minor principalities; the general German confederation was dissolved, and a new North German confederation was established practically under Prussian direction. South Germany was as yet excluded. The complete unification of Germany was still to wait for a very little while, until the South German states should learn to realise that their own interest was engaged in it.

The outcome of the "Seven Weeks War" was not at all what Napoleon had desired. Bismarck had got what he wanted without French help, and what the Emperor had wanted he entirely failed to obtain. The danger now to the completion of Bismarck's plans lay not in Austria but in France. It was his object therefore to crush that danger, but not to fight till he could strike with certainty of victory. Four years after Sadowa he was ready for a decisive struggle. The proposal for placing a Hohenzollern prince on the vacant throne of Spain gave him his opportunity of forcing a war upon France for which public opinion in France was at the moment more than willing. As with Austria, so now, Prussia had a plausible case for maintaining that France was the aggressor—that it was France which forced the war. Again, as in the case of Austria, the perfection of the Prussian military organisation, now extended over the North German confederation, coupled with the support of South Germany, gave the Prussians or Germans decisive victory. When peace was made after the fall of Paris Alsace and Lorraine were surrendered to Prussia, and a terrific war indemnity was imposed upon the French nation.

But the cession of territory and the indemnity were not the only results.



The French Empire collapsed when the Emperor himself surrendered at Sedan. For the third time France became a republic, with a government which for many years was necessarily unstable. But, on the other hand, while the besieging armies lay before Paris, the King of Prussia was proclaimed German Emperor, the Southern States uniting with those of the North German confederation to form a single union with the King of Prussia at its head. Germany had become the greatest military power in the European system. The new German Empire was born, like the fully armed Pallas Athene of Greek mythology.

Incidentally Italy had seized her opportunity, when the French Emperor was no longer in a position to shield the Papacy, to crown her unity by taking possession of Rome and making it the capital of United Italy.

## II

### THE GLADSTONE ADMINISTRATION

Lord Russell's public activities had ceased on his retirement from office in 1866, when he was already seventy-four years of age; Gladstone was marked out as the leader of the Liberal party, as emphatically as Disraeli was distinguished among the Conservatives. For twelve years to come those two personalities entirely overshadowed all others in parliament, and the rivalry only ended with Lord Beaconsfield's death in 1881.

Gladstone, as we have noted, had already come to the conclusion that the endless troubles in Ireland must be met by dealing with two questions in which he found a legitimate cause of grievance, the Established Church and the land system. The Irish Church question he brought definitely to the forefront while Disraeli was in office in 1868, and he had united the Liberals in determining upon disestablishment. In Ireland, as in England, the technical continuity of the Church as a religious corporation had been preserved in Tudor times. Apart from confiscations, the Reformed Church retained the wealth which had belonged to the Church before the Reformation. But the Reformed Church was never at any time the Church of more than one-fourth of the Irish people. It was a National Church only in the sense that it was recognised as such by the state. Obviously it could be argued with equal plausibility that the Church in the nineteenth century was one and the same with the Church a thousand years before, and was entitled to all that it had then possessed or that had subsequently been bestowed upon it—or, on the other hand, that the Church was not one and the same, that the Romanist priesthood, not the Anglicans, were the real successors of the Church, and that as a matter of fact all property bestowed upon it was merely held by it in trust, by the sanction of the state, upon condition of its fulfilling the office of a National Church.



Since in the Liberal view it did not fulfil that office, it was legitimate for the state to appropriate that wealth to national purposes.

Next, the two arguments stood opposed—on one side that the state in a Christian country ought to make profession of its Christianity, which it could only do by supporting and recognising a National Christian Church, and, on the other, that while Christianity was divided into sects the state as such ought not to recognise one sect in preference to the rest; to which was added the contention that endowments and connection with the state in fact tend to weaken the activities of the Church and to destroy its spiritual independence, an argument which involved the rejection of counter-proposals for the concurrent endowment of other religious bodies. Apart from such abstract questions there was the concrete difficulty that institutions and individuals derived their stipends from these endowments, which the usage of centuries had entitled them to count upon, and of which they could not be deprived without flagrant injustice.

The measure proposed by Gladstone took full account of this last consideration. All life interests were secured, £10,000,000 out of the £16,000,000 at which the wealth of the Church was valued being restored to it. At one stage it seemed likely that there would be a sharp conflict between the Commons and the Lords, since the Lords sent down amendments which were for the most part rejected by Gladstone. They were satisfied however with a show of compromise, practically arranged between Lord Granville and Lord Cairns for the Liberals and Conservatives respectively, and the bill became law. In its final form the uses to which the surplus was to be put were not specified, but were left to the pleasure of parliament.

With his next measure Gladstone embarked upon that troubled sea of Irish legislation which provided abundant occupation for Liberal and Conservative governments until after the twentieth century had opened. Theoretically in Ireland, as in England, the occupation of the land was for the most part a matter of contract between landlord and tenant; the terms were settled by simple bargaining, modified in practice by local customs which however had not the force of law. But in fact the conditions in Ireland and in England were entirely different. In England the contract was com-



Mr. Gladstone in 1869.

[From a photograph.]



paratively at least a free one; the diversity of employments open to the small capitalists who occupied the soil compelled the landlords to lease their farms upon reasonable terms, and improvements were for the most part carried out either wholly or partly at the landlord's expense. In Ireland, on the other hand, the occupier of the soil was a poor man who, if he left his holding, would find it exceedingly difficult to get any other employment. In effect he had to accept the terms that were offered him. And the Irish landlords, though of course with notable exceptions, were either unable or unwilling to sink their money on improvements. Consequently, if improvements were made at all, the tenant was apt to find that he paid for making them and that the landlord then pocketed the profits by increasing the rent.

Gladstone's Land Bill, then, proposed to provide by law two of the three conditions of a healthy and progressive occupancy which in England were practically secured without any direct application of law—fair rents, fixity of tenure, and free transfer, involving the tenant's right to have his property in improvements which he had effected recognised. But this could only be done by interfering with freedom of contract, which was held to be justified by the argument that the contracts interfered with were not in fact free. In Ireland the tenant was usually a tenant at will, occupying only under an agreement without any written lease, and liable to be simply evicted on six months notice. But the "Ulster custom" habitually observed by Ulster landlords, though it could not be enforced in law courts, forbade the eviction of a tenant who paid his rent, and allowed him to sell the goodwill of his tenancy—in other words, the value of such improvements as he had made—to some one else if he wished to part from his holding. The Ulster custom in effect recognised fixity of tenure and freedom of sale. The bill proposed to give this custom the force of law, thereby in effect establishing a joint proprietary. Land however could under this bill be granted on long leases, free from these restrictions; on the other hand, the tenant at will who was evicted for other reasons than the non-payment of rent could claim compensation for disturbance as well as for improvements. Also public loans were authorised in order to enable tenants who so desired to purchase their holdings; that is, it was attempted to provide means for establishing a peasant proprietary by the side of the dual proprietary. There was no machinery however for securing fair rents. The bill became law in 1870, the year after the Disestablishment Act.

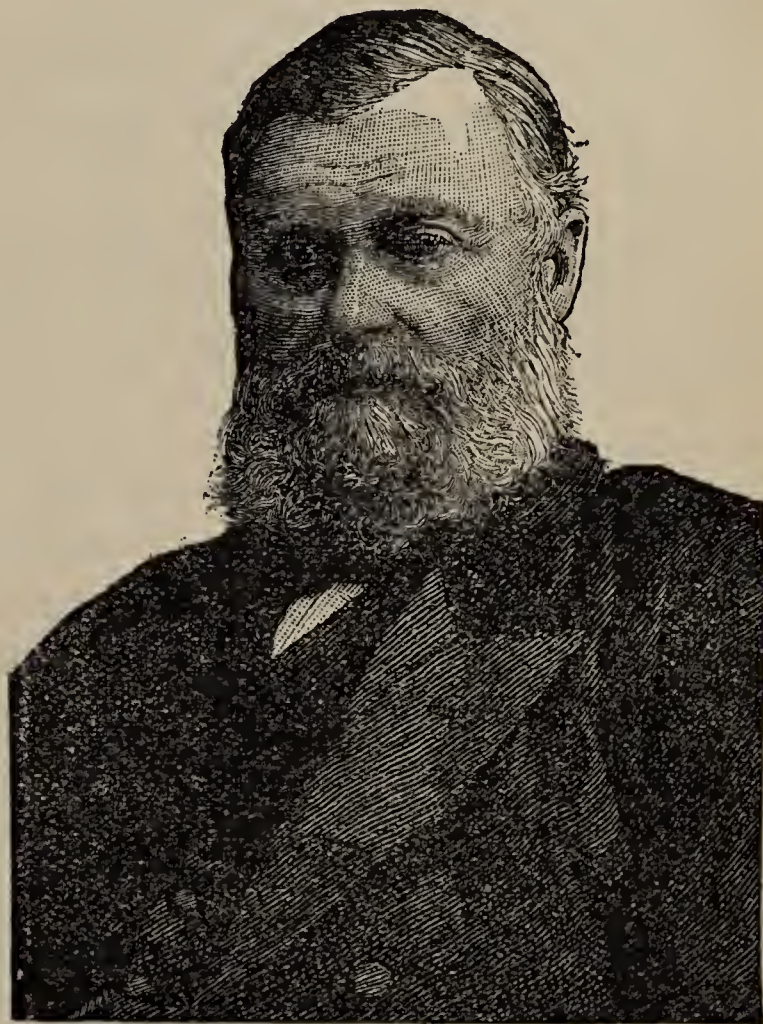
Still the introduction, with a pacificatory intent, of these two measures failed to produce pacification. Though the Fenian movement had not been agrarian, it had revived the spirit of hostility to the law among the agrarian population; and the disturbed state of the country caused a second bill to be accompanied by the Peace Preservation Act, forbidding the carrying of arms in proclaimed districts, and increasing the powers of the police and the summary jurisdiction of the magistracy. Irish Nationalist sentiment began to take shape as a demand for an undefined "Home



Rule" professedly differing both from the unqualified separatism of the Fenians and from O'Connell's old demand for the repeal of the Act of Union.

If Ireland occupied the first place in Gladstone's programme, the first democratic parliament was also necessarily zealous for the amelioration of popular conditions in England. The lack of education and of educational possibilities among the poorer classes attracted, as we saw, periodical attention after the passing of the great Reform Bill; but the result had been little more than the application of a slowly increased government grant in aid of schools maintained for the most part by voluntary support, under the control commonly of the Church of England, but in some cases of other religious bodies. The admission of the working-man to the franchise had extracted from a prominent Adullamite, Robert Lowe, the remark that we "must educate our masters," and at last the education of the children of the poor was recognised as a matter which must be taken in hand directly by the government.

The result was W. E. Forster's great Education Act of 1870. The voluntary schools were wholly unable to cope with the vast amount of work that had to be done, and hosts of children got no teaching at all because there was no accommodation, and no superfluous zeal on the part



W. E. Forster.

[From a photograph.]

of parents in seeking to obtain it. The essential principle of the scheme was to provide sufficient accommodation for all children, to make school attendance compulsory and contributory—that is, to require the parents to pay something towards the cost—but to throw the bulk of the expense upon the public at large, the provision being made not by the central government but locally through the rates. The new schools were to subsist side by side with the voluntary schools.

But the difficulty of religious instruction at once presented itself. The great consensus of public opinion demanded unmistakably that there should be religious instruction; but it seemed equally clear that in schools maintained by public funds drawn from the pockets of persons of every kind of religious denomination, the teaching should not be that of any one denomination. The difficulty of applying a government grant to Church schools had been surmounted by a conscience clause, which permitted parents to



withdraw their children from the religious instruction; but if the same principle were applied in the new state-supported schools, the children of Nonconformists would be shut out from religious instruction altogether; while it did not appear practicable to adopt the alternative of providing special religious instruction for each denomination. The solution was found in the "Cowper-Temple Clause," which required that no formularies of any religious denomination should be employed, but that undenominational Biblical instruction should be given; a compromise with which the majority of the public were satisfied, since the position of the definite Church and other denominational schools remained unaltered. All the schools were to be under government inspection, and the general control in each district was to be in the hands of the locally elected School Board.

Another question was necessarily brought into prominence in a parliament representing an electorate largely composed of the working-classes. This was the regulation of the position of trade unions. As matters stood in 1868 the trade union was an illegal association. It could not protect its own funds, even although those funds might be mainly used not for militant purposes, but for sick pay and other benefits. The law of Conspiracy had proved to be so elastic as to make practically any action in furtherance of a strike a punishable offence. To make combination an effective method by which the men could bargain collectively with the masters, it was necessary that the existence of the unions should be legalised, but that they should not be liable to be sued as corporate bodies, since they would then be open to ceaseless attacks involving a perpetual and paralysing litigation. Further, it was necessary that it should be legal for men to do jointly what it was legal for an individual to do; that is, that an action should not be rendered criminal because it was committed by persons acting in concert instead of singly, or, again, because the person who committed it was what the law called a "servant."

The Government however was by no means eager to move. Under pressure it at last brought in a bill which was subsequently divided into two. By the one, the unions were allowed to register themselves as legally constituted societies, while, as was universally understood, they were protected from being sued as corporations. The second, called the Criminal Law Amendment Act, sought to summarise and define the coercive acts which might be penalised. It did not introduce new penalties, but it so defined the law that, while it declared the strike or joint withdrawal from work to be legal, it declared every action by which the strike could be rendered effective to be illegal, including the mere publication or communication of the fact that a strike had been declared. Violence or threats were unnecessary. Any kind of persuasion to abstain from working in a place where a strike had been declared was "molestation" within the meaning of the law. To this position the Government held resolutely, with the result that employers fastened upon the first bill as having made



trade unions dangerously powerful, while the union men fastened upon the second bill as having completely paralysed them.

The Government then very emphatically lost favour with the working classes, and they did little to recover it by the introduction of the ballot, one of the old demands of the Chartists. The ballot enabled the voter to cast his vote without any one knowing on which side he had voted unless he chose himself to give the information, and was intended to secure him against giving it under virtual intimidation, though it was only to a limited extent that it actually served the purpose intended.

The Franco-Prussian War, with its startling demonstration of the military power of Germany, led to a much needed reorganisation of the British Army. One of the proposed changes encountered the most vehement opposition. This was the abolition of the purchase system, by which officers were able to buy promotion. That system had been established by royal warrant, and, in the face of the determined opposition to the bill on the part of the House of Lords, Gladstone took the unexpected course of abolishing it by royal warrant, a step which was vigorously condemned as unconstitutional.

If the domestic methods of the Government tended to diminish its popularity, this was still more the case with its conduct of foreign affairs. It successfully maintained the attitude of neutrality throughout the European war, and in some degree reduced the severity of the terms imposed by the Germans upon the French. Nevertheless, there was a good deal of popular feeling that British intervention ought to have been carried further, and that the dignity and power of the nation should have been emphasised more vigorously and decisively. The impression that ministers allowed themselves to be brow-beaten by foreign Powers was intensified by two grave diplomatic defeats. Russia seized the opportunity of Napoleon's fall to announce her repudiation of the Black Sea Treaty. Britain was able to insist upon the position that no single Power had a right to withdrawal, and that grievances must be referred to a conference of the signatory Powers. To this Russia acceded; but at the conference held in London her diplomacy procured everything she demanded. Britain in effect found herself isolated, and the clauses neutralising the Black Sea were cancelled.

The second defeat was suffered over the United States claim for compensation in connection with the *Alabama*. In 1871 the British, who refused to admit any liability for the injuries done by the cruisers, agreed to the appointment of a joint commission to settle the question. The American commissioners proposed that a lump sum should be paid to cover all claims. The British suggested arbitration. The Americans agreed, on condition that certain views of their own upon international law should be accepted as a preliminary. The British allowed their acceptance, while denying that they had as a matter of fact been valid heretofore. British counter-claims in respect of damage done by Fenian



raids were withdrawn from the arbitration, which was referred to a court whose members were nominated by various European sovereigns. The court awarded damages, chiefly in respect of the *Alabama*, amounting to 15,500,000 dollars, to the intense disgust of the British people, who jumped to the somewhat hasty conclusion that any court composed of foreign arbitrators might be relied upon to give an anti-British verdict. The mere fact that such an arbitration had been attempted at all was a great step towards finding peaceful solutions for differences of a certain type ; but it did not add to the prestige of the Government at the time.

The Prime Minister appears to have been unconscious of the extent to which the Government was losing popularity in the country. Nevertheless, when in 1873 a bill dealing with the Irish Universities was defeated and Gladstone resigned, Disraeli refused to take office, which was resumed by Gladstone. In this last year of the administration there was another Ashanti expedition, in which the actual operations were skilfully conducted by Sir Garnet Wolseley. But before this necessarily inglorious war was finished a general election at the beginning of 1874 returned the Conservatives to power. The Liberal ministry was weakened by dissensions, but Gladstone expected that an appeal to the country would give him a fresh lease of power. He had a large surplus, and believed that the long desired time had come when the income tax could once more be taken off, a consummation which he had always desired. His intention was to substitute for it an increase of the succession duties, the charges payable when property passed by inheritance. The announcement of his intention was denounced as a trick for catching votes. The government measures had aroused the indignation of one section of the community after another—Churchmen and Dissenters, the Army, the landowners, the licensed victuallers (a particularly dangerous body when their hostility was aroused), the manufacturers, and the working-men. This last group, who at the previous general election had voted for the Liberals, now in their irritation at the Criminal Law Amendment Act ran several independent candidates of their own, with the almost unfailing result that the Conservatives headed the poll ; and that party returned to power with a solid majority.

### III

#### BEACONSFIELD

According to the Conservative theory the country did not want heroic legislation and reconstruction such as the Liberals had attempted, but minor reforms which would make life work more smoothly for the working classes. In the philanthropic legislation of the past the Conservatives had been quite as active as the Liberals, since orthodox Liberalism was closely associated with the manufacturing class, and had been largely dominated



by the economic theories of what was called the Manchester School, the doctrines of unqualified competition. Though it was true that there had always been a Radical wing with sympathies very much more democratic and humanitarian than those of the official Liberals, it was not particularly difficult for the Conservatives to claim that they were the true friends of the working-man. It was therefore the Conservatives not the Liberals who now threw over the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and did actually give to the trade unions all that they had demanded. The application of the Conspiracy Law to trade disputes was limited. The terms "employer" and "workman" were substituted for those of "master" and "servant" in a new Act which made the agreements between them a simple civil contract, in which the two parties stood on the same legal footing. The "coercion" and "molestation" of the Criminal Law Amendment Act disappeared; persuasion which stopped short of violence or actual intimidation ceased to be punishable, and peaceful picketing was expressly sanctioned. Also a Nine Hours' Bill, limiting the work of women and children to nine hours, was now obtained by the Lancashire cotton spinners, though the Liberal Government had stubbornly refused it. Again, as the friends of the people, the Conservatives passed a series of Acts—an Agricultural Holdings Act, a Labourers' Dwellings Act, and others—which would have been extremely useful to the working classes if they had been compulsory. As they were merely permissive, the practical benefits derived from them were open to question, since in one group of cases local authorities made little use of the powers conveyed to them, while in others one party could practically insist upon the other agreeing to "contract out." In fact, among Liberals as well as among Conservatives there was still a strong feeling against interfering with freedom of contract. It remained for later parliaments to apply the principle that in actual fact such contracts very rarely are free and the desired end can only be secured by compulsion. For Ireland, after the sweeping measures of 1869 and 1870, the Government had no legislation to offer except the renewal of the Peace Preservation Act, which appeared to have been attended by entirely satisfactory results.

The real interest, however, of the Beaconsfield administration—so called because during 1876 Disraeli withdrew from the Commons to the Lords, with the title of Earl of Beaconsfield—lies in the revival of British activity in the field of foreign politics. The policy of non-intervention had been professed theoretically by every British minister from Castlereagh and Canning down to Palmerston and Gladstone; but the interpretations and applications of the policy had followed exceedingly diverse lines. With Canning and Palmerston it had at least been a first principle to insist that their voices should be heard in the councils of Europe; that Britain was not to be treated as a negligible quantity. On the other hand, another school, at this time dominant in the Liberal party, was disposed to be somewhat ostentatiously pacific; and the results of their diplomacy during the late administration had undoubtedly been viewed with extreme dissatis-



faction by the country. It was to the Conservatives not to the Liberals that the Palmerstonian tradition had passed. Disraeli, the most imaginative of English statesmen, adopted as his own the magnificent view of the high destinies of the British Empire and its moral supremacy among the nations; also he was of opinion that the other nations should understand that it would in no way suffer its own interests to be ignored.

To those principles he added a predilection for startling and theatrical effects. Thus in 1875 he took the world by surprise with an exceedingly ingenious stroke which gave the British Government a dominant control over the Suez Canal, the new waterway from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. The canal itself had been constructed mainly by French enterprise and practically without British support. It was the property of a commercial company in which the dominant influence was French, while the Khedive of Egypt was by far the largest shareholder. But the Khedive was very much in want of cash, and contemplated the sale of his shares; Disraeli was no sooner made aware of the fact than he forestalled all other buyers by purchasing shares for the British Government at a cost of £4,000,000. It was obvious that circumstances might arise when British control would be of the utmost importance, but from a merely commercial point of view it was a sound investment for the nation. At the same time the entire unexpectedness of the step created an uneasy feeling in the minds of that very large portion of the British public which particularly dislikes being taken by surprise. The capture of the Canal shares emphasised the interest to Britain of Egypt, the Eastern Mediterranean, and, by consequence, the Turkish Empire. Disraeli inherited from Palmerston that statesman's views upon Russian aggression, and his policy towards Russia is the dominant feature of his administration both in its European and in its Indian aspects.

The root of the troubles in the Near East is always to be found in the Turkish government's treatment of its Christian subjects. A united Europe in which the great Powers trusted each other and each one might be counted upon to act with pure disinterestedness could always have brought the Turk to reason. But the Turk enjoyed a deep-seated conviction that the Powers distrusted each other, would never be roused into taking active steps in unison, and yet would never permit any one Power to take action independently. He had no objection to making the most satisfactory promises, but the promises never materialised in action. British statesmanship generally regarded the preservation of the Turkish Empire as necessary to British interests, and was equally convinced that Russia in her own interest desired Turkey's disintegration. Therefore while Britain might view favourably the application of a strictly joint pressure by the Powers upon Turkey, she was emphatically opposed to permitting the independent intervention of Russia. Germany regarded the whole question as secondary; and Austria had no inclination to active intervention unless she could reap her reward in the Balkan States.



In these circumstances the Porte suavely ignored the European concert, and continued its misrule in the mainly Slavonic and Christian provinces of the Balkans and of the Danube. Consequently in 1875, just before the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, the Western Provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina revolted. In the following January the Powers, at the instance of Austria, addressed a note to the Porte without any tangible result. In the summer a series of palace revolutions ended by placing Abdul Hamid on the Turkish throne. Meanwhile the insurrections had spread to Montenegro, Servia, and Bulgaria, and England was startled and horrified by the appalling reports sent home by newspaper correspondents of the atrocities committed by Turkish troops in Bulgaria. A strong anti-Turkish agitation was set on foot. The continued failure of the Powers to influence the action of Turkey, which merely amused itself by promulgating empty projects of reforms, gave Russia excuse or justification for implying that if the Powers would not take effective action in concert, she would do so independently; and in the spring of 1877 war was declared between Russia and Turkey.

In England the anti-Turkish agitation had risen high, but it sank as the anti-Russian agitation rose. All the old suspicions of Russian intentions and Russian methods were excited to the highest pitch, and the magnificent defence of Plevna and of the Schipka Pass by the Turks against tremendous odds appealed powerfully to British sentiment. At the turn of the year the Russians had forced the Balkan passes and were moving towards Constantinople. The British Government made it clear that they regarded war with Russia as something more than a possibility, and their attitude in making active preparations was indubitably popular. Every barrel-organ in the country was grinding out the strains of the popular ditty, "We don't want to fight but by jingo if we do," which introduced the new term Jingoism, which has ever since held its own in political slang. The British fleet was despatched to the Sea of Marmora to protect British interests. But a few days later, on March 3rd, it was announced that Russia and Turkey had agreed upon the Treaty of San Stefano.

The terms of the treaty were less alarming than had been anticipated; but in Lord Beaconsfield's view Russia and Turkey were not to be permitted to settle matters on their own account. The Treaty of San Stefano must be referred to the Powers, in accordance with the Treaty of Paris. Russia declared her willingness to refer the treaty to the Powers, but reserved to herself the right of accepting or rejecting their proposals. Britain refused to attend the congress on such terms; war appeared to be almost inevitable, and the Foreign Minister, Lord Derby, who was opposed to war, resigned. His place was taken by Lord Salisbury. Active preparations continued, and the country was again startled by the announcement that the Crown, without reference to Parliament, had ordered a contingent of Indian troops to be despatched to Malta.

Nevertheless war was averted. Russia agreed to submit the treaty to



a European congress to be held at Berlin. That change of attitude was due to a secret agreement negotiated by Lord Salisbury. Another secret agreement had been made with Turkey. The terms did not, in fact, insist upon all the objections which had been raised to the Treaty of San Stefano. Lord Beaconsfield, accompanied by Lord Salisbury, attended the Berlin Congress, and the practical outcome was a triumph for his diplomacy. Roumania, Servia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria north of the Balkans, were made independent principalities. Austria was to control the administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The reservation of Southern Bulgaria secured the Turkish frontier. This was the sum of the Russo-British bargain. But the Berlin Treaty did not touch the separate British treaty with Turkey, by which Britain gave an independent guarantee to defend the Turkish dominion in Asia by force of arms, and herself occupied the island of Cyprus. Turkey, of course, gave the usual promises with regard to the treatment of her Christian subjects and the introduction of necessary reforms. Lord Beaconsfield returned to England, having achieved the proverbial "Peace with honour." Thus in the summer of 1878 his government was at the high tide of its popularity; yet in less than two years it had fallen.

Of the troubles in India and Africa which contributed to this end we shall speak in the next sections. But apart from these, though submerged for the time by the popular excitement over the restored European prestige of Britain, was a latent sense of uneasiness caused by Lord Beaconsfield's devotion to a policy of surprises, his habit of announcing decisive steps taken before the nation had any inkling of what was coming. That feeling sprang into renewed life as soon as the Government met with failures instead of successes. And at home nothing was done to attract popular favour. Lord Beaconsfield's programme had been expensive; there was no relief of taxation, and the country was passing through a period of depression for which the Government was held responsible. Beaconsfield's withdrawal to the House of Lords had left the Commons without a strong leader, and there Charles Stewart Parnell had organised the band of "Home Rule" Irishmen into an instrument for the prevention of all government. Every available form of the House was systematically employed to make the efficient conduct of business impossible. In Ireland also he created the Land League, a body whose primary object was to insist upon fair rents and, if fair rents were refused, refusal to pay any rent at all, with the secondary intention of ultimately converting tenancies into ownership. At the same time he made it apparent that his own ultimate intention was at least to destroy the English ascendancy, if not to sever Ireland from the British Empire.

The inability of the leaders to control the House of Commons detracted from the dignity of the Government. In Afghanistan and Zululand there were disasters. At the end of 1879 Gladstone, who had retired from the active leadership of the Liberals, emerged from his comparative seclusion to denounce the ministry in his famous Mid-Lothian campaign. A bill was introduced by ministers to transfer the property and powers of



the London water-companies to a single central body. It seemed likely to prove that the bargain proposed was a very bad one; and the bill was unpopular. The Government had now held office for six years; Lord Beaconsfield appealed to the country, and discovered too late that the country had turned against his policy. Of the 652 members returned to the House of Commons 349 were Liberals, and of the rest 60 were Irish Home Rulers. Beaconsfield resigned; the Liberal party recognised, and its chiefs impressed upon the queen, that the electorate demanded a government with Gladstone at its head.

## IV

## INDIA

One of the last acts of the previous Conservative administration had been the appointment of Lord Mayo to the Indian viceroyalty in succession to Lord Lawrence. Lord Mayo was assassinated after achieving an unexpectedly high reputation, and the Liberals appointed Lord Northbrook in his place. Both Mayo and Northbrook maintained their predecessors' attitude towards Afghanistan, but a strong school of politicians was growing up in India who were dissatisfied with "masterly inactivity." In their view the persistent advance of Russia in Central Asia made it of extreme importance that there should be a rectification of the whole north-west frontier which should not only render it impregnable but should make it also an effective basis for military operations in and beyond Afghanistan. They held also that, however excellent the intentions of the particular ruler in Afghanistan might be, it was necessary to exercise a certain supervision over that country in order to prevent Russia from planting her influence there, and to keep the British government in India supplied with really trustworthy information. These ideas were adopted by the Beaconsfield administration; Lord Northbrook was not prepared to fall in with them; and in 1876 he resigned, to be succeeded by Lord Lytton.

It was at this moment that Disraeli had resolved upon another of his picturesque effects. It was one of Lord Lytton's earliest duties to hold a great Durbar or assembly of native princes in order to proclaim, on the first day of 1877, that the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland had resolved to add to her titles that of Empress of India, Kaiser-i-Hind. The step was viewed with considerable disapprobation at home, but Disraeli was probably right in believing that it would appeal to the imagination of the Indian peoples with whom pomp and ceremonial magnificence is a visible testimony to power.

Whether the effects were great or small they were of an intangible order; not so was it with the Afghan policy of Lord Lytton. There could be no doubt in the mind of any one at all as to the real advantages which



would be derived from the presence of a British Resident at Kabul, on one condition—that his presence should be acceptable to the Amir and to the people of Afghanistan. The difficulty lay precisely in the fact that it was not acceptable. But Lord Lytton had made up his mind that it was necessary whether acceptable or not. Pressure was brought to bear upon the Amir to receive a British mission, and the Amir at once scented an intention on the part of the British to establish control over him through a Resident. He explained that a mission could not possibly be admitted. Relations became very much strained ; but active measures were postponed in view of the then imminent danger of a European war. The war was averted, but the Berlin Treaty was followed by increased activity on the part of Russian agents in Asia. Lord Lytton learnt that a Russian



The British Residency, Kabul, after the rising of 1879.

mission had been received at Kabul. There could be no excuse then for refusing a British mission. He again announced that a British mission would be sent to Kabul with Sir Neville Chamberlain at its head.

Sher Ali protested, declaring that the Russians had not come by his good-will. Nevertheless the mission was despatched, but was turned back on the Afghan boundary. The result was inevitably an ultimatum demanding the acceptance of a permanent mission. The demand was ignored, and Lord Lytton proceeded to invade Afghanistan. Only one of the three invading columns, that commanded by Sir Frederick Roberts, had any hard fighting to do. Sher Ali recognised the futility of resistance ; the Russians, who had no intention whatever of helping him, departed from Kabul, and he himself fled, to die very shortly afterwards, leaving the Kabul government in the hands of his son Yakub Khan. Yakub accepted a treaty. A



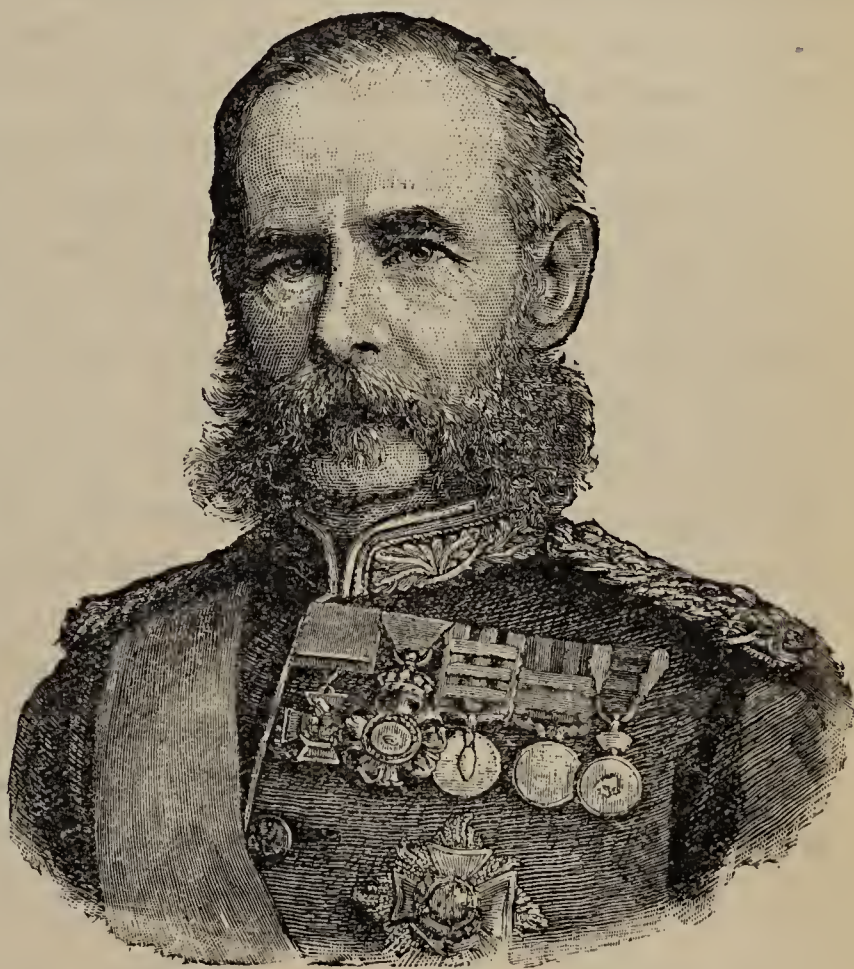
"scientific frontier," that is, the military control of the passes, was ceded, and a British Resident, Sir Louis Cavagnari, was accepted. In July (1879) he arrived at Kabul with a small escort. The third column under Sir Donald Stewart, of which the objective had been Kandahar, where it was now stationed, was to remain there till the cold weather. The rest of the British troops were withdrawn.

Then the old story was repeated—up to a certain point. There was a rising in Kabul; the Resident and his escort were cut to pieces after a gallant defence. But within four weeks of the massacre Roberts, with a force of six thousand men, was back within fifty miles of the capital. Ten days later he had entered it. Yakub Khan, who, with questionable truth, declared his own entire innocence of the recent outrage, was permitted to resign; and the temporary administration was placed in the hands of Roberts.

This was at the end of October; but by December it had become clear enough that Roberts with his small force could do nothing more than remain on the defensive in his position at Sherpur. Here, however, a prolonged attack was finally and decisively repulsed at the end of the year, and Roberts was master of the Kabul district.

In the spring (1880) Stewart to a considerable extent cleared the country by his march up from Kandahar to Kabul, in the course of which there was one exceedingly hot but brief engagement at Ahmed Khel.

From this time policy was dictated by the newly inaugurated Gladstone Government; Lytton was recalled, and his place was taken by Lord Ripon. The intention was to revert to the Lawrence policy. The restoration of Yakub Khan was impossible, as also was the recognition of his brother Ayub at Herat. The Amir chosen was one of the claimants whom Sher Ali had succeeded in expelling, Abdur Rahman. But Kandahar was to be retained by the British under British control with another Afghan governor, a second Sher Ali. Between Abdur Rahman at Kabul, Yakub at Herat, and this Sher Ali at Kandahar, the preservation of peace was most improbable. Yakub opened the attack by marching from Herat towards Kandahar, raising the tribes as he went; Sher Ali's troops mutinied, and a part of the small British force which had been left at Kandahar, marching



Sir Frederick (Lord) Roberts in 1880.

[From a photograph.]



out to face Yakub, met with a disaster at Maiwand. Kandahar was rapidly placed in a state of defence, and Stewart and Roberts at Kabul resolved that the latter should at once march to the relief of Kandahar with a force of ten thousand men. Speed was essential. For three weeks Roberts vanished into the unknown. At the end of three weeks he had successfully accomplished his march of three hundred miles, entered Kandahar, and on September 1st entirely shattered Ayub's forces.

Again there was a modification of the political programme. The Government was convinced that the sound principle for dealing with Afghanistan was that which had been ultimately adopted towards Dost Mohammed. The Amir was to be left to establish his own authority. He was not to have a Resident forced upon him, but he was to be pledged to have no diplomatic relations with any foreign Power, while the British were pledged to defend him against aggressive action. The retention of the ceded frontier outposts was a necessity, but it was decided that the occupation of Kandahar would involve more risk than benefit, since the way to it from India was secured by the occupation of Quetta at the head of the Bolan Pass on the Baluchistan frontier. The retirement from Kandahar was strongly disapproved by military advocates of the forward policy, but it may be said that the best military opinion was divided on the question. The evacuation of Afghanistan was completed early in 1881, and Abdur Rahman proved himself entirely capable of establishing his own authority. Also he was shrewd enough to distrust Russia more than the British. On the whole, it may be claimed that the policy of evacuation, in spite of the risks involved, was justified by the event.

## V

### SOUTH AFRICA

Events in the distant regions of the Empire are apt to escape much public attention at home unless they happen to involve military operations. This was the case with South Africa until the outbreak of the Zulu War during Lord Beaconsfield's administration. Nevertheless, events of grave import had taken place at an earlier date.

We have seen that, by the direct action of the British Government during the fifties, two Boer republics had been recognised on the west of the Drakensberg mountains, the Orange Free State between the Orange River and the Vaal, and the South African or Transvaal Republic beyond the Vaal. The ill-defined boundaries on the west of these two states left open a line of expansion northward from Cape Colony which was, for the time being, ignored. Some years later, however, the discovery of diamond mines changed the situation. The lands were claimed by a Griqua or semi-Hottentot chief, but also by the two Boer states. An arbitration on



the question decided in favour of the Griqua, from whom they were purchased by the British Government in 1871. When it was subsequently proved that the award had been wrong, the Government declared that, as the paramount and responsible power in South Africa, it could not surrender the diamond fields to the Free State, to which it gave not over generous compensation in cash. The westward expansion of the Boer states was blocked, and the way to the interior was held open to the British.

The Orange Free State under President Brand was a model of orderly and progressive government. The same thing could not be said of the community beyond the Vaal, where there was no firm central administration. There were troubles with the neighbouring Bantu tribes, and behind those tribes on the south-east lay the highly organised military state of the Zulus, under their exceedingly vigorous monarch, Cetewayo. The exchequer of the South African Republic was exhausted, and there appeared to be a very serious danger of a collision with the Zulus, in which there was a painful presumption that the Boers would be wiped out. The wiping out of the Boers was likely to be followed by a huge general rising of the black races against the white. Sir Theophilus Shepstone, a commissioner sent up from Natal to investigate the position, came to the conclusion that there was only one way of averting the danger—the annexation of the South African Republic, and the termination by British rule of the anarchy there prevailing. There were by this time considerable numbers of British and German settlers in the Transvaal district who were in favour of the annexation, and Shepstone persuaded himself that only a minority of the white population was opposed to it. Consequently in April 1877 the annexation of the Transvaal was proclaimed.

Lord Beaconsfield's Colonial Secretary at this time was Lord Carnarvon, the pioneer of the conception of a federation of South Africa on Canadian lines. South Africa, as a matter of fact, was not at this time ripe for the development of that conception, but it was with this aim in view that Sir Bartle Frere, an Indian official of great experience and ability, was at this moment appointed Governor of Cape Colony and High Commissioner for South Africa. The annexation of the Transvaal was not his doing; it merely fell to him in the course of official routine to confirm Shepstone's action. A much more pressing question was the exceedingly menacing conduct of Cetewayo.

The Zulu state was organised with a single eye to military effectiveness. Between the death of Dingaan some thirty years earlier and the accession of Cetewayo in 1873, Zululand had remained comparatively quiet; but now it had become evident that the Zulu king was contemplating a revival of the military glories of his earlier predecessors. The protests of the British Government against his revival of certain sanguinary practices were answered with something perilously like defiance. To Frere it appeared imperative that the principles applied in the government of India, where



most of his experience had lain, must be applied also in Africa. He proposed to place a Resident in Zululand who should discharge the functions of the Residents at the courts of the native princes in India, and should impose limits on the barbarism of the Zulu government. This, with other demands, was formulated in an ultimatum delivered to Cetewayo in December 1878. In plain terms, Frere was convinced that, unless the Zulu military organisation were broken up, there would be a war sooner or later which might very well assume terrific proportions. Cetewayo would certainly yield to nothing short of a convincing display of force. At whatever risk there must be no symptom of a hesitation which could be construed as a sign of conscious weakness.



Cetewayo.

Carnarvon was now no longer at the Colonial Office, and the home Government, with its eyes fixed upon Afghanistan, could not be induced to realise the gravity of the situation. Cetewayo ignored the ultimatum. Under the general direction of the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Chelmsford, three British columns entered Zululand, the movements beginning in the second week of January 1879, when the date fixed by the ultimatum had passed. The advance of two of the columns was stopped by the news of a great disaster to the third column under Lord Chelmsford himself. A portion of his force was encamped at Isandlwana, while the Commander-in-Chief advanced with the

rest to attack a Zulu military post at some distance. But the Zulus were not waiting there. The 900 men left in camp at Isandlwana became suddenly aware that they were being enveloped by a force of 20,000 Zulus. In the desperate struggle which ensued the British camp was wiped out, though in some degree the blow was counterbalanced by the magnificent defence of Rorke's Drift at the passage of the Buffalo River, where a handful of men had been left to keep the communications with Natal open.

The advance into Zululand was paralysed. It was not till April, three months after Isandlwana, that the arrival of reinforcements enabled Lord Chelmsford again to take the offensive. The issue then could hardly be in doubt, and the Zulu army was completely shattered at the battle of Ulundi in July. Cetewayo became a fugitive; his hiding-place was subsequently betrayed and he himself was deported to Cape Colony. Lord Wolseley, who had arrived to supersede Lord Chelmsford, was left with the task of providing a system of government for Zululand, which was divided into districts, still under a dozen native chiefs with a single British Resident exercising a general control. The system, however, did not work satisfactorily, and Zululand was actually annexed in 1887.

The affairs in South Africa and in Afghanistan were very serious blows



to the Beaconsfield administration at home. But the destruction of the Zulu power had destroyed also the principal justification for the recent annexation of the Transvaal. While the Zulu menace was present, it would have been vain for the Boers to attempt any active protest. But the Dutch dislike to the British domination was as strong as ever, and when there was nothing more to be feared from the Zulus it bore fruit.

## VI

## THE EIGHTY PARLIAMENT

The new Gladstone administration rested at the outset mainly upon what was called the Whig element; its most prominent members were Lord Hartington, Lord Granville, and the Duke of Argyle. There were members of the extreme Radical wing who had strong claims to office, but the avowed or suspected republicanism of such men as Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain made it difficult to find a place for them in the ministry. Sir Charles withdrew his own claims in favour of the member for Birmingham, who was for some time regarded by the Opposition, or at least by their organs in the Press, as the scarcely veiled influence which was hurrying the Prime Minister along the paths of destruction. In later years he was destined to assume a curiously different character in their eyes.

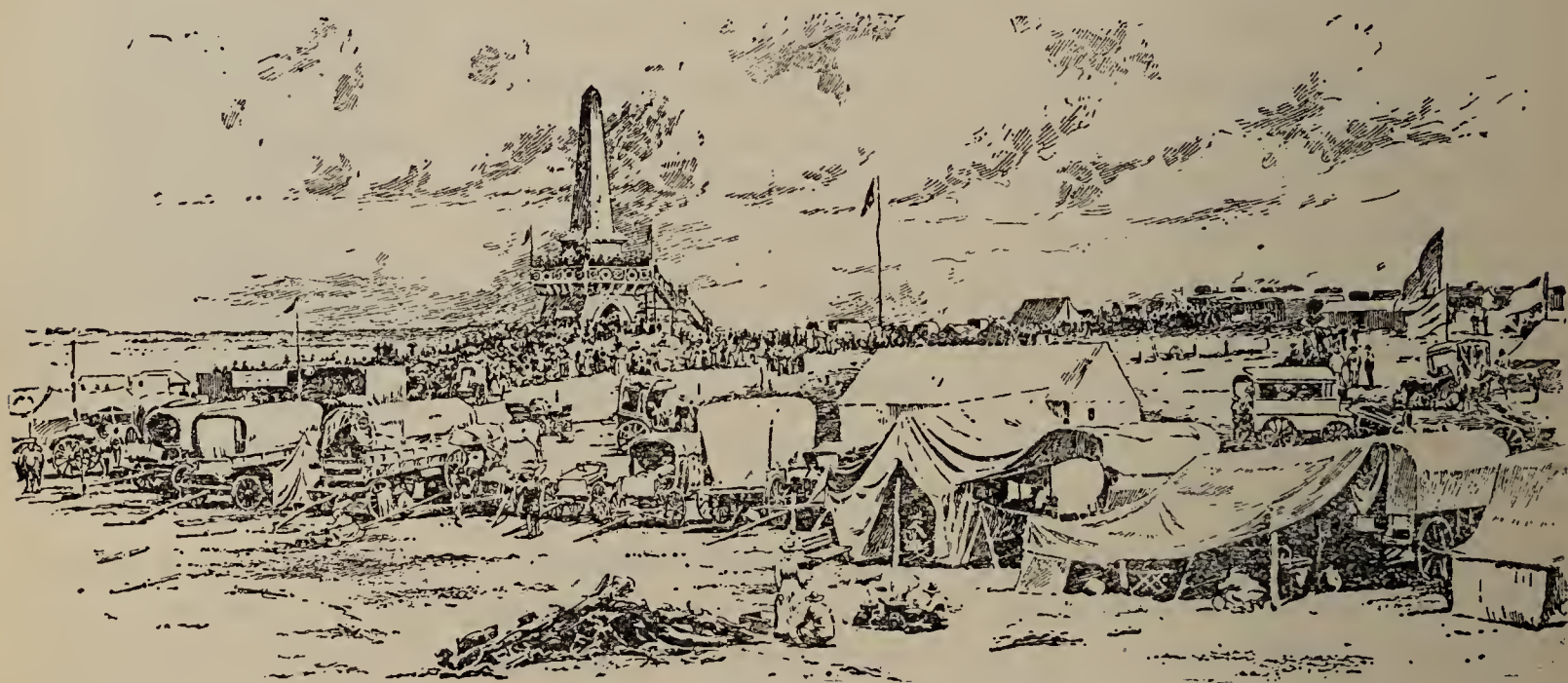
For four years domestic interests and domestic legislation were almost confined to Irish questions. Outside these islands public attention was engaged for the first eighteen months upon Afghanistan and South Africa, while from the summer of 1882 Egyptian affairs became absorbing, almost at the moment when Irish affairs had reached a startling climax. How the Afghan affair was settled we have already narrated, but we have only hinted at the next scene in the South African drama.

The burghers, as the citizens of the Transvaal called themselves, expected that a Liberal Government would be prompt to reverse the annexation carried out by its predecessors, and to restore the independence which a previous Liberal Government had granted without any reluctance. They were disappointed by emphatic pronouncements that there was to be no reversal of policy. Before the end of the year the Government was in fact reconsidering the question; but this was not known to the burghers. Shepstone had been mistaken in his belief that the majority of the white men had been in favour of his action; the majority resented the annexation, and when they understood that it was definitive they preferred defiance to submission. In December, on the anniversary of their great victory over the Zulu king Dingan, they proclaimed the Republic and successfully attacked two small British detachments at Potchefstroom and Bronkhorst Spruit. While Sir Hercules Robinson at the Cape was endeavouring to



obtain a solution of the dispute through the mediation of President Brand of the Orange Free State, Sir George Colley, who had taken Sir Garnet Wolseley's place, advanced to the Transvaal border with a British column to suppress what was unquestionably in a technical sense the rebellion of the burghers. On January 28th, 1881, he met with a reverse at Laing's Nek, and a month later his force was routed by a handful of the farmers at Majuba Hill, where he himself fell.

Before this event the home Government had made up its mind that the annexation had been a blunder, not, as represented by Shepstone, in accordance with the will of the people of the Transvaal. Retrocession was resolved upon and despatches to that effect had reached South Africa. On the face of it, it appeared that the disaster at Majuba made another change of front imperative. The authority and power of the Empire must be



The Monument at Paardekraal, Krugersdorp, where the Boers proclaimed the independence of the Transvaal in 1880.

vindicated before any concession could be made. Nevertheless, the Government resolved to set aside expediency in favour of the most elevated ethical principles. On these principles the burghers ought not to be penalised for their success in fighting for a cause which the Cabinet had already recognised as a just one. What would have been granted without their victory at Majuba should not be denied them because of that victory. Hostilities were suspended, and terms for the retrocession of the Transvaal were arranged.

The Republic was to be reinstated, endowed with complete self-government within a territory of which the boundaries were definitely delimited. The suzerainty of Great Britain was to be recognised, which precluded the Boer government from making treaties on their own account, and a British Resident was to be established at the capital, Pretoria. Two years later it must be remarked the arrangement was modified by a new "Convention of London," under which the Resident was withdrawn, and it became a



disputable question whether the British could thereafter legally claim any control over anything except the foreign relations of the Transvaal Republic. It was not perhaps surprising that the lofty morality by which the Government claimed to have been guided was not recognised either by the Opposition in England, the bulk of the Transvaal Boers themselves, or a large proportion of the white population of South Africa. The magnanimity of the mighty power which abstained from demonstrating its overwhelming strength was regarded as mere pusillanimity and weakness, at the best dictated by a paltry economy ; out of which conviction a brood of troubles was to be born in the future.

Gladstone assumed office in 1880 under the belief that Ireland was pacified by what he had done before, and by the expectation of what he would do in the future. It was immediately announced that the Peace



Majuba Hill.

Preservation Act would not be renewed. The Irish members, led by Parnell, clamoured for an immediate extension of remedial measures, while the Opposition clamoured against the withdrawal of the exceptional powers of the Executive. The Government introduced two bills, one a measure for the relief of distress, the other to provide compensation for evictions following upon the non-payment of rent, where the failure had been due to a *bona fide* inability to pay. In the Lords this bill was mercilessly criticised and decisively rejected. At the same time the Peace Preservation Act ceased to operate. Immediately there broke out a fresh crop of agrarian outrages, and the new weapon was brought into action which has taken its name from its first victim, Captain Boycott.

In the face of this new departure, commonly attributed to the influence of the Land League, it was impossible to rely merely upon the ordinary law. A fresh coercion bill was brought in by the Chief Secretary for



Ireland, W. E. Forster, the parent of the Education Act of 1870. It was passed after fierce and stormy opposition by the Irish members, but was followed by a new Land Bill of which the primary purpose was to secure fair rents. A new principle was introduced. Land courts were to be established for the assessment of fair rents on the application of tenants or of landlords and tenants acting in concert. The Irish members denounced the bill as wholly inefficient, the Opposition denounced it as a flagrant invasion of the rights of property, and the Duke of Argyle retired from the ministry which had repudiated the principle of freedom of contract. The bill was greatly mutilated in the House of Lords, and a deadlock was only averted by a compromise which satisfied no one.



C. S. Parnell.  
[From a photograph.]

Some months earlier Gladstone's great antagonist had passed away. His strange and mysterious personality had fascinated first his party and then the country in spite of themselves, and the most audacious innovator among modern British statesmen was conceived as the ideal Conservative. He was a brilliant statesman who had inspired the nation with a new spirit of imperialism, a diplomatist who had triumphantly vindicated the position of the country in the councils of Europe, a parliamentarian who had fought his way to an unqualified leadership against apparently overwhelming odds.

But he was a singular person to have been selected as the great representative of Conservatism, a title which was absolutely appropriate to his successor in the leadership of the party, Lord Salisbury.

The Parnellites made no pretence of being satisfied with the Land Bill; outrages continued; and since English opinion held that Parnell and the Land League were responsible for them, several of the Irish leaders were arrested and imprisoned at Kilmainham. They replied by issuing a manifesto calling upon the tenants to pay no rent until they were released. The response was the condemnation and suppression of the Land League as an illegal organisation, though, according to the unfailing rule, it was presently revived under a new name.

In the spring of 1882 the Peers, on a resolution of Lord Salisbury, appointed a committee to enquire into the working of the Land Act. Gladstone replied by a resolution in the Commons virtually censuring the action of the House of Lords. Neither resolution could have any immediate material effect; but that of Lord Salisbury marked a definite political purpose on the part of the great Conservative leader. Unlike Lord Beaconsfield, Salisbury, who as Lord Cranborne had withdrawn from the last Derby administration on account of the Reform Bill, feared the new democracy and the power of the democratic House of Commons, and hoped to use the House of Lords as a counterpoise. It may be said that the



increased activity of the House of Lords was initiated by their treatment of the Irish Compensation Bill in the previous year, but it was Lord Salisbury who systematically developed the policy.

Immediately after this, the Irish leaders were released from Kilmainham and Forster resigned the Irish Secretaryship. There was undoubtedly an understanding that they would use their influence to stop outrages, which was developed in the mind of the Opposition into a corrupt compact for their support of the Liberal Government in parliament; and the whole transaction was vehemently stigmatised as the "Kilmainham Treaty." But it is equally certain that the Parnellites were not conspicuously transformed into allies of the Liberals.

The leaders had hardly been released when Lord Frederick Cavendish, who succeeded Forster as Irish Secretary, was assassinated in the Phoenix Park in Dublin. Consequently a bill promised for the relief of tenants whose rent was in arrear was preceded by a very stringent "Prevention of Crimes" Bill to be enforced for three years, giving to the Irish Executive abnormal powers of search, arrest, and summary jurisdiction. The murder in Phoenix Park to some extent silenced the Irish leaders; but in spite of the Crimes Bill there was no cessation of the outrages and murders, and the new organisation called the National League, avowedly political as well as agrarian, took the place of the suppressed Land League.

Two months after the Phoenix Park murder England was awakened to the existence of complications in another region by the bombardment of Alexandria. During the last decade the debts of the Khedive of Egypt, Ismail, had compelled him to subject the Egyptian finances to the joint control of British and French. As a practical consequence the dual control was inevitably extended to the Egyptian administration. A nationalist group in Egypt was consequently formed, which aimed at overthrowing the European ascendancy through the instrumentality of the Egyptian army controlled by Arabi Pasha. The group dominated the Khedive Tewfik, Ismail's successor, and captured the ministry. Counter-pressure from Britain and France aggravated the antagonism, and Arabi with the army assumed an attitude so aggressive that the British Admiral Seymour, after inviting the co-operation of the French, which was refused, considered it necessary to open a bombardment and then to occupy Alexandria. But while Arabi remained in arms nothing more could be done. An expedition was despatched to suppress him, and in September his forces were shattered by Sir Garnet Wolseley at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. Arabi was taken prisoner and Cairo was occupied.<sup>1</sup>



Arabi Pasha.

<sup>1</sup> For map of Egypt and the Sudan, see page 942.



The British action had destroyed not only the army but the whole system of Egyptian government. Except perhaps in France it was generally recognised that this action had been fully justified. France, by refusing to co-operate, had put herself out of court, and there was no escaping the necessity that Britain should on her own account reorganise the shattered government. Annexation would have been warranted; a protectorate would have been warranted; but the British Government wanted neither,



Osman Digna, leader of the Mahdi's forces.

[From a photograph.]

and chose instead to claim a complete immediate control of affairs, in the illusory expectation that it would be merely temporary. The Khedive's government was restored, but Lord Cromer—at that time Major Evelyn Baring—was appointed Agent and Consul-General, which meant in effect Dictator, and a British controller was appointed over each department of state—Finance, Public Works, Judiciary, and Army.

The work of reorganisation went on steadily and efficiently. But far to the south in the Egyptian Sudan there arose in 1883 a fanatic calling himself the Mahdi, the appointed successor of Mohammed, who gathered to his standard the wild Mohammedan tribes of the interior. The British refused to attempt bringing the interior under control; the organisation of efficient government in Egypt proper was work enough. But the Egyptian government despatched an expedition under an English officer, Hicks

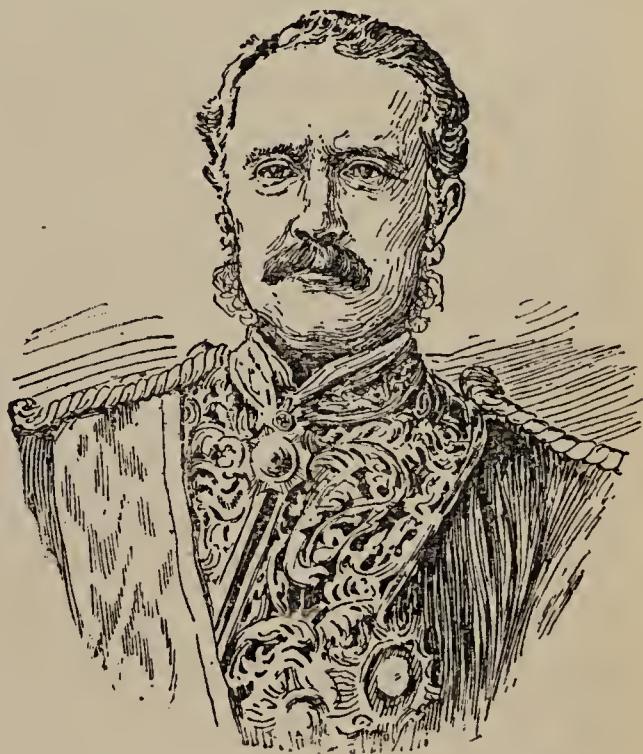
Pasha, to overthrow the Mahdi, and the expedition was annihilated instead. The British insisted that the Sudan must be left to take care of itself and that the garrisons there must be withdrawn. The withdrawal of the garrisons was a task of extreme difficulty. To carry it out the British Government appointed the one man who might be able to accomplish it successfully, General Charles George Gordon. Gordon, a Puritan and a mystic, was one of those men who seemed to accomplish impossible ends by methods impossible to any one else. The one way of dealing with such a man is to accept the whole enormous risk of leaving him an absolutely free hand. Gordon went to the Sudan knowing that he had not an absolutely free hand; that he would be supported up to a certain point, but not beyond. When he got to the Sudan he acted on the assumption that he would be supported at all costs, and proceeded to carry out plans which to the authorities appeared to be madness. They refused the support which he



demanding. The result was that in March 1884 he found himself shut up in Khartum, although a threatened invasion of Egypt proper by the Mahdi was broken by a force under General Graham at El-teb.

But it was not possible to leave Gordon to his fate at Khartum, although it had been definitely understood that no military expedition was to be sent to the Sudan. An expedition to rescue Gordon was necessary. Yet the home authorities failed to realise the urgency of the situation. Valuable time was lost over differences as to the form which the expedition should take. It was not till September, when Gordon had already been locked up for six months, that Lord Wolseley sailed for Egypt. Then the arrangements for an advance up the Nile were proceeded with vigorously. Even until the last moment it was believed that the relief would be effected. But in fact Khartum was hardly defensible. When the Mahdi appreciated that the British force was actually close at hand he rushed the place, and Gordon was killed two days before the arrival of the British on January 28th. So perished the heroic soldier whose marvellous personality had at last, at the very end of his career, suddenly impressed the imaginations of the British people with an enthusiastic admiration rarely paralleled. His death dealt an irremediable blow to the Government whose blundering failure to rescue him was felt as a shameful betrayal. But there was nothing more to be done. The re-conquest of the Sudan was not to be thought of. The expedition fell back. Years of patient and persistent organisation were needed before the times were ripe for a conquering advance upon Khartum.

In the years between 1881 and 1884, during the period of the Egyptian troubles, attention was temporarily attracted to India by a somewhat ill-advised attempt on the part of the Viceroy Lord Ripon to carry out an administrative reform extending the jurisdiction of native magistrates over European residents. A storm of indignation was raised amongst the British in India, easily understood by any one who grasped the conditions of European rule there, but unintelligible on the hypothesis that there is no reason for recognising any distinction between the white and the brown races. The affair was unfortunate, because although the measure in the form in which it was finally promulgated did not give rise to grievances, it intensified instead of diminishing the racial antagonism which is always latent in the great dependency. In relation to the colonies, the growth, in the minds of a few leading men, of a new conception of the united British Empire, was marked by the birth of the Federation League ; but



General Gordon.

[From a photograph.]



the idea had not as yet taken any general hold of the public. While Lord Rosebery was a lively advocate of the new movement, the official attitude was more nearly akin to that of the Colonial Secretary, Lord Derby, who had joined the Liberal ranks ; it seemed to be governed by the assumption that separation was the natural and desirable goal to which all colonies were tending and should be encouraged to tend.

At home Ireland continued to be disturbed, and in England a good deal of alarm was created by sundry ineffective dynamite outrages originating with the extremists among the Irish in America. But there was little opportunity for legislation until, in 1884, a bill was introduced for completing the democratic system by extending the franchise to the agricultural labourer who had still been excluded by the Reform Bill of 1867. Officially the Conservatives declared themselves in favour of the franchise extension, but it was obvious that the step would necessitate a far-reaching redistribution of seats ; and the Conservatives claimed that the two measures should be combined. The Government insisted that the Franchise Bill should come first, though it was to be followed by a Redistribution Bill. The Franchise Bill was carried in the House of Commons ; the House of Lords, under Salisbury's leadership, passed a resolution that it should not become law except as a part of a complete scheme. This attitude was taken as implying an attempt to compel the Government to dissolve, and Liberals angrily denounced the claim of the peers to force a dissolution. The bill was withdrawn with the announcement that it would be reintroduced in an autumn session. There was every prospect of a fierce struggle between the Houses. The Government had been losing credit with the country ; but a fiery campaign in the summer appeared to revive Liberal enthusiasm, and the "mending or ending" of the House of Lords seemed likely to become a plank of the Liberal platform.

Yet the strong element of Conservatism in Gladstone himself, as well as in the Whig wing of the party, made him anxious to avoid a constitutional crisis of such gravity, while the more cautious among the peers viewed the results of such a struggle with grave apprehension. A compromise was arrived at between the leaders ; when the autumn session was opened, the bill went through the Commons, and it was then announced that if it were passed the Redistribution Bill should be brought in forthwith, and that in effect the second bill should not be made a party measure but should be shaped so far as possible in conformity with Conservative as well as Liberal opinion. The second bill was then brought in, the Lords passed the Franchise Bill, and the Redistribution Bill went through both Houses with the minimum of controversy. The fundamental principles of the measure were the disfranchisement of boroughs with a population of less than 15,000, and the return of one member only by every constituency with only a very few exceptions.

The Liberals had gained something by the vigorous campaign of the summer ; but this was more than compensated by the fall of Khartum ; and



the Penjdeh incident in Afghanistan in March 1885 probably weakened the Government again. There was a collision between Russian and Afghan troops on the border of Afghanistan, unmistakably due to the aggressive action of the Turcoman commander Ali Khan, whose name has been conveniently Russianised as Alikanoff. For a moment it appeared that there would be war between the Amir and the Tsar, and that the British would be bound to support the Amir in the most thorough-going fashion. Fortunately Abdur Rhaman, with a singular shrewdness, refused to make much of the incident which was judiciously smoothed over; and the process of delimiting the several frontiers, which had given occasion to it, was continued without further serious friction. At the same time there was a certain feeling, born of the general suspicion of timidity attaching to the Gladstone Government, that sufficient vigour and firmness had not been displayed; though on the merits of the particular case there was hardly sufficient warrant for that view.

The weakened Government was defeated on the Budget. Gladstone resigned, and Lord Salisbury took office. Divergencies in the ministry as to the treatment of Ireland had contributed to its fall. But the Conservatives, in an actual minority, were not inclined to throw down a direct challenge to the Irish members. They did not find it necessary to renew the Crimes Act, and they brought in a generous measure, known as Lord Ashbourne's Act, for the provision of public funds to facilitate the purchase of their holdings by the Irish tenantry. Coming from the Conservative Government the measure received no active opposition. In the circumstances however a dissolution was inevitable, and the results of the general election in August were unexpected. Gladstone had rejected certain overtures from Parnell, declaring that a definite Irish policy could not be laid down until Irish opinion had been clearly expressed by the now enlarged electorate. The answer as far as Ireland was concerned was emphatic. No Liberals were returned for that country, but there were eighty-five Home Rulers. The Liberals in the House of Commons numbered precisely one-half of that assembly, and it was obvious that the Parnellites were in a position to paralyse any government whatever. Lord Salisbury had no disposition to attempt carrying on government by Parnellite aid. When parliament met in January 1886, it was announced that a new Coercion Bill would be brought in. Ministers were defeated on an amendment to the address, Lord Salisbury resigned, and the queen sent once more for Gladstone.



## CHAPTER XXXVII

### LORD SALISBURY

#### I

#### THE HOME RULE STRUGGLE

THE brief Gladstone administration of 1886 may be taken as marking the moment after which it becomes no longer possible to view party politics with the impersonal detachment proper to a historian. From that date one of the two great political parties has been definitely committed to the doctrine that Ireland ought to have a separate legislature of her own to deal with Irish affairs. To the other party that doctrine has seemed to be fraught with such danger to imperial unity that resistance to it must be the paramount consideration to which all other questions must give way. Whatever other complications there may be, whether Liberal leaders have actually made Home Rule a definite part of their programme or not, they have always affirmed their adherence to the doctrine. Only at one general election has the party received substantial support from Unionists, because on that one occasion it was clearly understood that they would not introduce a bill for Home Rule. The Gladstone administration introduced a new line of cleavage which has continued until the present year, 1912, when a Home Rule Bill is before parliament. If that bill becomes law that line of cleavage will disappear, and it appears almost certain that economic policy will take its place, as it did in the case of the one general election referred to, that at the close of 1905.

When, in February 1886, Mr. Gladstone undertook to form a Cabinet on the defeat and resignation of the Salisbury Government, it immediately became clear that he intended to introduce a measure of Home Rule. Hitherto the overwhelming majority of Liberals as well as of Conservatives had regarded the idea of establishing a parliament at Dublin as entirely outside the sphere of practical politics. Advanced Radicals had indeed been suspected of leanings in that direction; but their minds were very much more set upon democratic reforms in England, while the Whig wing at least had absolutely no sympathy with the Irish demand. Mr. Gladstone succeeded in carrying the bulk of his party with him, but some of the most prominent of his former colleagues refused to join the Cabinet or left it as soon as his proposals were formulated, and formed a separate Liberal Unionist party in parliament. This group included on the one side Whigs



such as Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen, and on the other the personal followers of the then recognised champion of Radicalism, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.

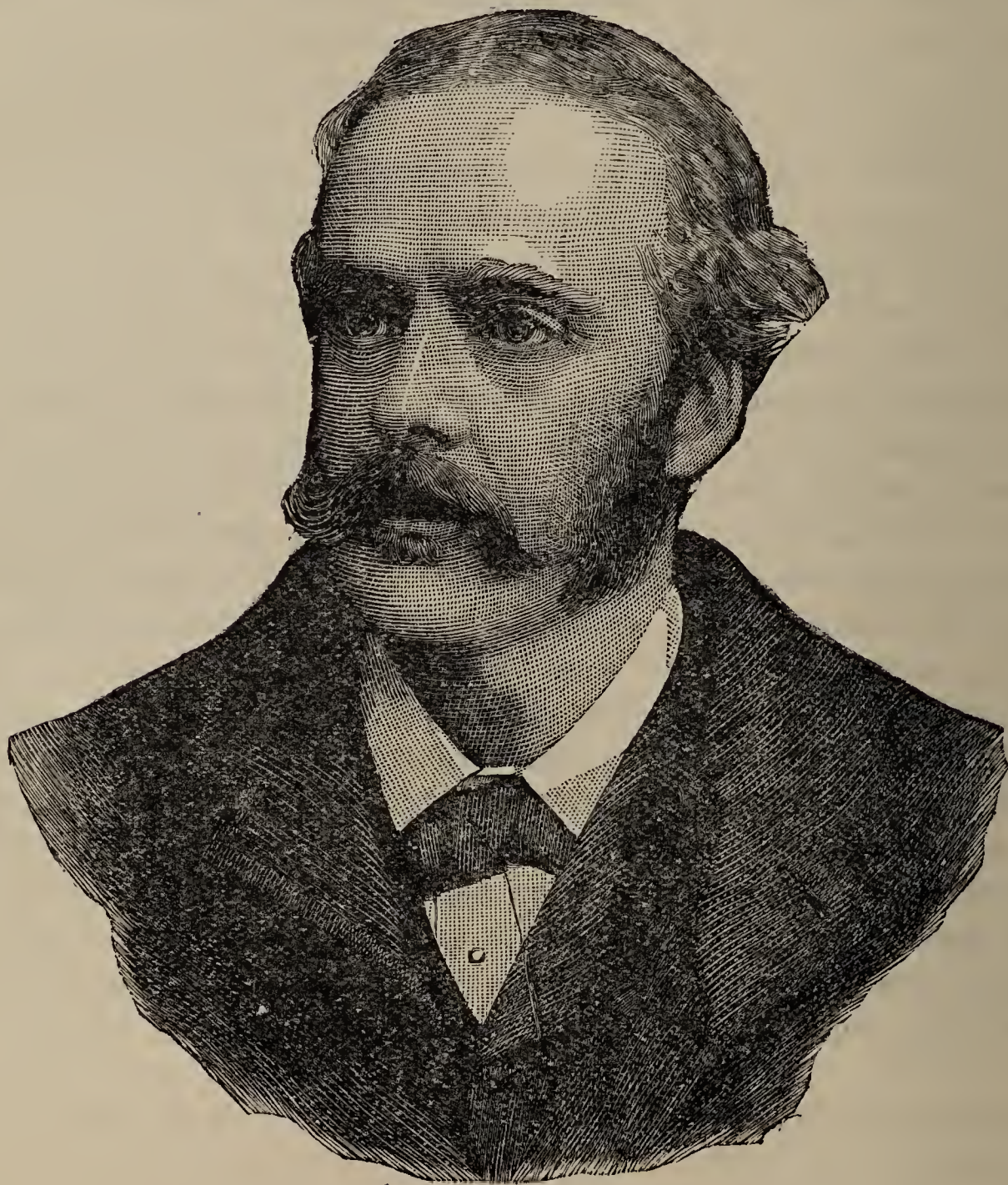
The features of the new policy were presented in two measures, a Home Rule Bill and a Land Bill. The purpose of the first was to provide Ireland with a legislature of her own for the control of Irish affairs. While to the bulk of the Unionists, Conservative or Liberal, any conceivable scheme of Home Rule would have been obnoxious, opposition concentrated upon the point that Ireland was to cease altogether to be represented at Westminster. While the tactics of Parnell seemed to make the exclusion of Irish members eminently desirable from the point of view of the conduct of public business, it carried with it the separation of Ireland from all interest in imperial concerns, and it was therefore denounced as being emphatically separatist in its effects—an encouragement, that is, to the Irish people to sever their slender surviving link with the Empire. The Land Bill was opposed no less heartily. The intention was to remove the land question from the scope of action of the proposed Irish parliament by a huge scheme of land purchase on the part of the British Government which would have established a peasant proprietary. The real intensity of the opposition to the whole scheme lay in the rooted belief that the leaders of the Irish people were separatists who would merely use the new machine as an instrument for breaking down the British connection altogether, coupled with the anticipation that “Home Rule means Rome Rule.” The Home Rule Bill was defeated on its second reading.

Mr. Gladstone appealed to the country; the Conservatives did not contest the seats of Liberal Unionist candidates; seventy-eight members of that party were returned; and the Conservatives outnumbered the British and Irish Home Rulers together by thirty-five. Mr. Gladstone resigned, and Lord Salisbury took office with an administration formed entirely from the Conservative party, since his own proposal for a Coalition Government with Lord Hartington at its head was rejected by the Liberal Unionist leader.

The measures for Ireland had effected little towards the relief of agricultural distress. Tenants were in arrears with their rent, and evictions multiplied. Mr. Parnell introduced a ‘Tenants’ Relief Bill, which, among its provisions, authorised the land courts to stay evictions if half the rent was paid. The bill was thrown out and the Irish leaders instituted the ingenious device known as the Plan of Campaign. The tenants were to combine and offer the landlords a fair rent, or what they considered a fair one. If the landlords refused it the tenants were to pay over that fair rent not to the landlords but to a committee charged with carrying on the struggle. When parliament reassembled at the beginning of 1887 new rules of procedure were adopted in the House for the repression of obstructive tactics. The application of the “closure” and its subsequent developments were invariably condemned by the Opposition of the day as shameless interference



with the right of free speech, and were defended by the Government of the day as necessitated by the gross abuse of free discussion by the Opposition. After settling procedure the Government went on to introduce a new Crimes Bill for Ireland, conferring upon the Lord Lieutenant new powers of condemning leagues or combinations as illegal, and of proclaiming disturbed districts, which were thereupon subjected to a practically arbitrary government. The long and angry debates were brought to an abrupt



Mr. A. J. Balfour.

[An early portrait by Lafayette, Dublin.]

conclusion by the application of the closure. The Act, however, was accompanied by a new Land Bill, in which the most important concessions gave some facilities for a revision of rents, and authorised the county courts to grant time for the payment of arrears. The bill was considerably modified in favour of the tenants, at the instance of the Liberal Unionists. Still Ireland continued to be the scene of violent disorders, of constant collisions between the peasantry and the police, who were employed to assist at evictions or to suppress illegal meetings, and of much excitement



over the arrests of leaders who encouraged the populace to defy the "tyranny" of the law. The language of partisanship was at this time peculiarly acrimonious, and was perhaps made the more so by the placid persistence with which the Chief Secretary, Mr. Arthur Balfour, treated offenders in Ireland precisely as if they had been ordinary law-breakers, while he remained calmly impervious to the most virulent personal attacks.

In the course of a controversy so bitter as was then raging no accusations were too gross to be readily believed. An exceedingly comprehensive attack upon the Land League in general, upon all the Irish leaders, and most uncompromisingly upon Mr. Parnell, in the *Times* newspaper, led to one of the Irish members bringing a libel action against that paper. The action failed on the ground that Mr. O'Donnell, the plaintiff, had not been singled out; but the republication in evidence of certain letters purporting to have been written by the Irish leader roused Mr. Parnell to action. He repeated his previous contemptuous condemnation of the incriminating documents as forgeries, and he demanded the appointment of a select committee of enquiry upon the specific question of the letters. The Government rejected his demand, but they passed an Act to appoint a commission virtually to investigate all the charges which had been publicly brought against the Land League and the Irish leaders in general. In effect sixty-five prominent Irish leaders were put on their trial on a series of definitely formulated charges.

The Parnell Commission, as it is always called, met in September 1888. Hitherto it may be said that almost the entire British public, whatever its political creed, had no doubt whatever that the Parnellites had habitually incited resistance to the government, that they had been enabled to carry on their operations by means of financial assistance from the American Irish, that they had not repudiated connection with the most extreme section of that body, and that they had rather encouraged than attempted to restrain agrarian crime. When, after a year had passed, the report of the judges confirmed these ideas, but with distinct modifications in favour of the Irish members, some of whom were proved to have actively endeavoured to check outrages, the verdict was taken by most Unionists to be a decisive condemnation of the Home Rule movement, and by most of the other party to prove that the most serious objection to Home Rule was less serious than they had previously supposed. But, as a matter of fact, public interest in the trial was only in a very minor degree concerned with the political question at issue; it was almost confined to the personal charges against individuals, and, above all, Mr. Parnell. The worst of those charges rested upon the evidence of letters, and, most conspicuously of all, one particular letter which, if genuine, would have proved Mr. Parnell's condonation of the Phoenix Park murder. But when it was proved in the course of the trial that this letter with others had quite certainly been forged and sold to the *Times* by a man named Pigott, there was a strong revulsion of public sentiment. The *Times* had permitted itself to be deceived



quite honestly ; but it would never have done so if the virulence of political feeling had not made it incapable of testing evidence. The recklessness with which the forgery had been accepted recoiled upon the heads of Mr. Parnell's accusers at large, and from that time there was no longer the old readiness to assume as a matter of course the worst possible interpretation of everything said or done by any Irish member. Mr. Parnell almost became popular.

Yet in the year following, 1890, the Irish parliamentary party suffered a grievous blow from a scandal in which the leader was the most prominent figure. The Nonconformist conscience came into play, and the Irish party was split between those who stood by their old chief and those who declared that he could no longer be parliamentary leader. His death shortly afterwards did not for a long time suffice to heal the animosities which had arisen in this connection, and the affair went far to paralyse the activities of the disunited Irish parliamentary party.

Meanwhile, Mr. Balfour's drastic application of the Crimes Act in Ireland was accompanied not unsuccessfully by further remedial measures, an extension of Lord Ashbourne's Land Purchase Act, the reclamation of waste lands, and the development of light railways. By 1891 the Government found itself in a position not only to introduce still another Land Purchase Act, but at the same time to suspend the Crimes Act over almost the whole country. In the next year, however, a general election gave the Gladstonian Liberals in conjunction with eighty Irish Nationalists a majority of forty in the House of Commons ; the defeat of the Government was followed by Lord Salisbury's resignation, and Mr. Gladstone formed his last administration.

Again the old leader returned to the one object which he had now set before himself, and introduced a new Home Rule Bill. The fundamental difference between this bill and its predecessor was that the Irish members were to be retained at Westminster, but with their numbers reduced to eighty. The proposal which it had first embodied for limiting the subjects on which they might vote was subsequently dropped. The bill was fought stubbornly line by line, and was ultimately forced through the House of Commons by the use of the closure, now vehemently denounced by its original authors. But the House of Lords declined to recognise that the authority by which the bill had been carried was that of the nation. They rejected the bill. Very shortly afterwards Mr. Gladstone, who was now eighty-four years of age, retired, and was succeeded in the leadership by Lord Rosebery. When, in 1895, the Government resigned, when defeated by a snap vote on a side issue, the electorate at the general election which immediately followed emphatically endorsed the action of the House of Lords by returning the combined Conservatives and Liberal Unionists with a majority exceeding one hundred and fifty. Not for seventeen years was another Home Rule Bill to be introduced in parliament.



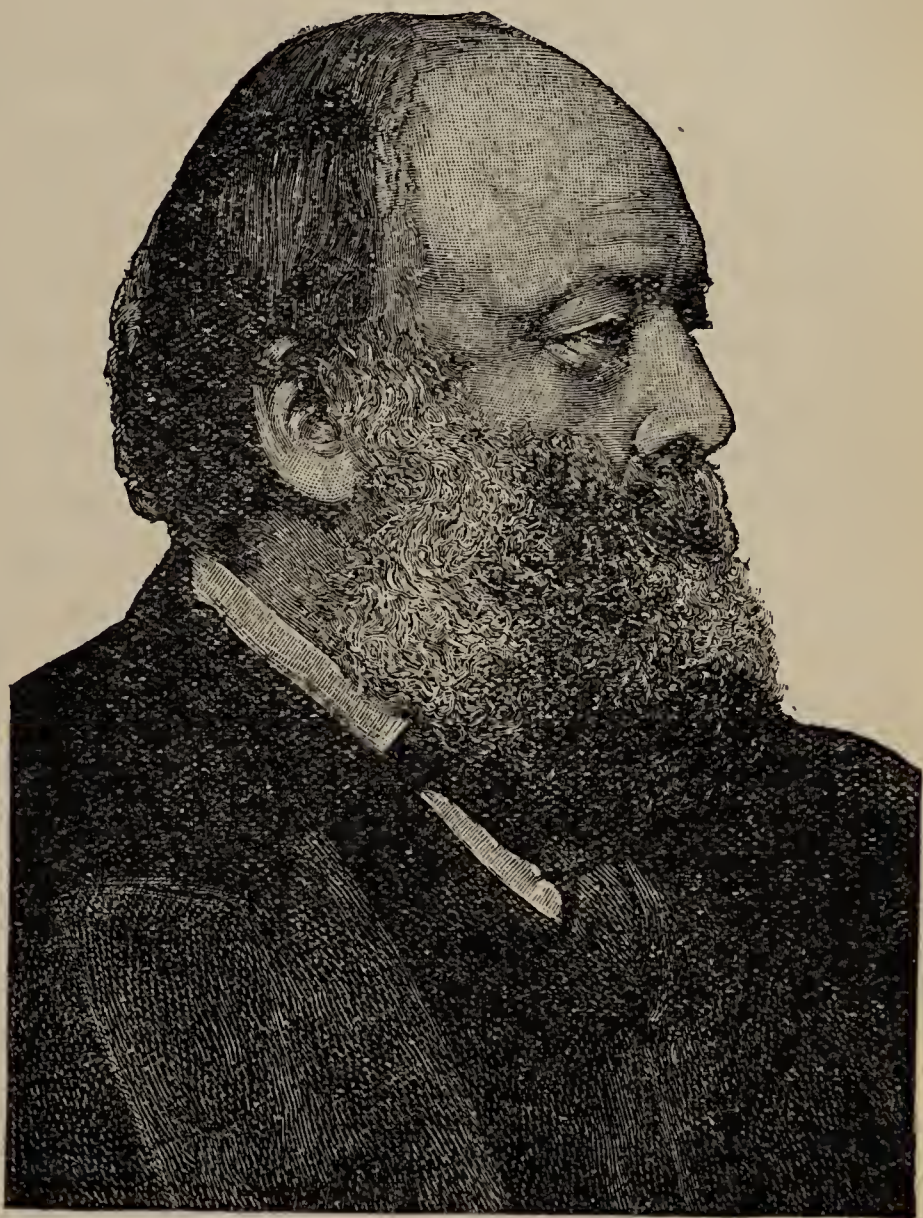
## II

## LORD SALISBURY AND THE UNIONISTS

Though Irish affairs were exceedingly prominent during the ten years which followed the last extension of the franchise, they did not occupy public attention exclusively.

Although the Liberal Unionists refused to take direct part in the administration after the fall of the first Gladstone ministry the Salisbury Government was dependent upon their support. Few as they were a very large proportion of them were men of ability and weight, respected on both sides of the House, though the most brilliant of their number was more feared than respected by his political opponents. Some considerable time elapsed before hopes of a reconciliation between Mr. Chamberlain and his former colleagues were entirely given up, and a reconciliation would have jeopardised the ministerial majority. Thus the Liberal Unionists held a strong position, and the Conservatives, willingly or unwillingly, found it necessary to defer largely to their wishes.

The position became perhaps more marked when Lord Salisbury's brilliant but erratic Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Randolph Churchill, resigned at the end of 1886. Lord Randolph was the champion of what was called Tory democracy, the doctrine that it was the business of the Conservatives to carry out democratic measures. He resigned in order to force upon his colleagues economies which they were not inclined to sanction, believing himself to be indispensable to the Cabinet, since there was no member of the Conservative party in the House of Commons to whom the office which he held could be assigned with confidence. In this crisis the Liberal Unionists came to the rescue of the Government; Lord Randolph



Lord Salisbury.

[From a photograph by Russell & Sons.]



had "forgotten Goschen," who, with the assent of his own party, accepted the vacant office, and thereby sealed the adherence of the Whig section to the Government. Mr. Chamberlain's section, however, was to a considerable extent in sympathy with Lord Randolph; his support of the Government became for the moment more dubious, and the efforts for a Liberal reconciliation were renewed. They failed completely, since the divergencies were such as could not be bridged over, and Mr. Chamberlain ultimately developed into the most uncompromisingly hostile of Mr. Gladstone's opponents. But the necessity for conciliating him until the later stage of actual coalition between Conservatives and Liberal Unionists was a constant factor in the Conservative legislation.

This influence made itself felt not only in the Irish Land Bills. In 1888 the ministers brought in a Local Government Bill, which caused Mr. Ritchie, the minister in charge of it, to be dubbed "Ritchie the Radical." Hitherto local administration had been very largely in the hands of the local justices. The bill established elected county councils on the same basis as the elective corporations which controlled local affairs in the boroughs, the elected councils themselves electing a number of coadjutors known as aldermen. The large areas were further divided up into districts with an elective district council. Boroughs with over fifty thousand inhabitants were constituted as separate counties, while separate arrangements were made for the metropolis.

The Local Government Bill of 1888 and the Free Education Act of 1891 were the two leading pieces of domestic legislation for which the Salisbury Government was responsible. Mr. Forster's Act of 1870 had made education compulsory; that it should be made free was the apparently inevitable corollary. The proposal, introduced by a Conservative Government, found comparatively little opposition; although there were not wanting some stout-hearted individualists who denounced the measure as destructive of the sense of parental responsibility, declaring that free meals would follow free education, and that in the long run the state would find itself called upon to make entire provision for the rising generation. But when a measure seems generally desirable to both parties in the state it is vain to call it Socialistic; that term in ordinary parlance is merely a phrase expressing disapprobation, which is somewhat unfortunate for persons who prefer the pursuit of accuracy in political terminology. Free education was in fact a measure typical of the "Socialism" which is based upon no abstract theory, but calls for state intervention and state action where immediate beneficial results are anticipated from action in the particular case.

The Conservatives then gave free education, and therein they had the support of the Opposition. Neither party perhaps realised at the time one unfortunate but inevitable result. Hitherto the voluntary schools had competed on comparatively even terms with the board schools. But if they were to provide free education they must have equivalent support from the



state. How far was the provision of additional support from the state compatible with the preservation of their denominational atmosphere? This question was presently to become acute, and the controversies on the subject embittered religious antagonisms, carried them into party warfare, and gave sectarian disputes a prominence painfully injurious to the efficiency of the educational system.

Before the close of the administration three other measures were passed with the general approval of the Opposition as well as of the Government. A modification of the Factory Acts extended the protection of women, and raised the age at which the employment of children was permitted. An Agricultural Holdings Act enabled county councils to advance three-fourths of the money required for the purchase of small holdings, and a Tithes Act made the tithe payable by the landlord instead of by the tenant. Nothing was thereby affected except the method of collecting the charge. Since 1835 the tenant had paid the tithe, and had paid the landlord his rent less the amount of the tithe; now he paid the landlord the full rent and the landlord paid the tithe. But the Nonconformist tenant was relieved from the feeling that he was being compelled personally to contribute to the maintenance of a Church to which he did not belong, a fiction which had been kept in being by the old method.

When Mr. Gladstone formed his last administration, the new Home Rule Bill held the stage until its rejection by the House of Lords. The Government, however, declined to admit the right of the House of Lords to dictate a dissolution of parliament. They proceeded with the process which was called "filling up the cup," introducing measures which the Lords amended past recognition. An Employers' Liability Bill made employers in certain cases responsible for injuries suffered by their employees, and abolished the doctrine of "common employment." The meaning of this doctrine was that the employer was not responsible for injuries suffered by a workman in consequence of the negligence of a fellow-employee. But the bill was made nugatory by an amendment of the Peers, which permitted contracting out; consequently it was withdrawn. A new Local Government Bill establishing parish councils was carried, though at the cost of accepting two amendments which appear to have convinced Mr. Gladstone that the time was close at hand when the constitutional position of the House of Lords would become a question too critical to be deferred. At the age of eighty-four, with eyesight and hearing impaired, he felt himself no longer fitted to enter upon so grave a contest. The aged statesman resigned, and the leadership of the Liberal party passed to Lord Rosebery.

The new administration which endured for fifteen months, ending in June 1895, was signalled by only one domestic measure of first-rate importance. This was Sir William Harcourt's budget, which provided a lucrative source of revenue by the new imposts called the "Death Duties," whereby the state appropriated a substantial proportion of property left on decease. The principle was old enough, since in feudal times the heir had



to pay fees to his feudal superior on entering upon his inheritance ; but it remained for Sir William Harcourt to apply it so as to add materially to the revenue, though the abstract justice of doing so had long been maintained by theorists. This was the one measure in which the Government got its own way, since the Lords considered themselves warranted in refusing to recognise the composite majority in the Commons as representing the national will. The futility of the situation had become obvious ; and when Ministers were defeated on a snap vote concerning the supplies of ammunition, they took the opportunity of resigning. The Opposition took office, at once appealed to the country, and were returned to power with an overwhelming majority, which was maintained without being greatly impaired for ten years.

In India the close of 1895 had witnessed a further extension of dominion, though not within the limits of the peninsula, by the final annexation of Burmah in consequence of the persistently impracticable attitude of the Burmese government. Mandalay was occupied in November 1885, and the formal annexation was carried out in the following year. Relations with the Amir of Kabul continued to be satisfactory, and the completion of the delimitation of the Afghan, Russian, and British frontiers removed that question from the danger sphere. Perhaps the most important feature of the period now under review was the appearance and development within the British dominion of the body which named itself the Indian National Congress. Representing almost exclusively one particular class, it claimed to represent the voice of India. The persistent view of the Indian Government that the National Congress is not representative of real native opinion is difficult of acceptance in the British Isles, because it is the only articulate voice that comes from the natives of India ; and the action of Government has been considerably complicated in consequence.

Lord Beaconsfield's attitude of emphatic self-assertion on the part of the British Empire was not maintained by Lord Salisbury in his relations with foreign Powers. On the contrary, it was his guiding principle to avoid participation in the complications of European continental politics and to attend strictly to British interests. His ascendancy over his own party was sufficient to enable him to adopt a policy of "graceful concessions" which would have been extremely difficult for a Liberal Government. Lord Salisbury stood without a rival in his knowledge of foreign affairs, and it was not easy to charge the diplomatist who had shared with Lord Beaconsfield the honours of the Berlin Treaty with readiness to pay an excessive price for peace. In fact at this period the European power whose interests were most difficult to reconcile with our own was France, and the source of friction lay in Egypt, from which France had been ousted by the events leading up to the British occupation. The preservation of a free hand in the control of Egyptian affairs was of first-rate importance, and Lord Salisbury was denounced chiefly by the organs of his own party for yielding to the demands both of France and of



Germany in other regions, virtually as the price for the free hand in Egypt.

In most cases there was justification for the concessions. The European Powers had awakened to the fact that Africa was the only quarter of the globe which was not under the dominion of highly organised states, and a scramble had set in for the partition of the Dark Continent. The partition into spheres of influence was carried out between 1885 and 1892, and it was freely declared that Lord Salisbury surrendered to Germany much which ought to have been claimed for the British Empire. In the view, however, of German expansionists, Germany came very badly out of the bargaining. The only plausible ground for condemning the African bargain from the British point of view was the failure to obtain complete territorial continuity from North to South of the Continent. Canada, however, and Newfoundland, had warrant for declaring that their interests were neglected by the Imperial Government in the settlement with France of the long-standing disputes as the Newfoundland Fishery rights. Canada also was ill-pleased over another Fisheries Treaty with the United States. The treaty, however, collapsed, because both the great American parties sought popularity by denouncing it in view of an approaching presidential election. More satisfactory was the settlement through arbitration of a seal-fishery quarrel with the United States, which had twenty years before acquired Alaska from Russia, and now sought to impose limitations against which they had protested vigorously at an earlier stage; the arbitration was decisively in favour of the British claims, although concessions were made outside the award of the arbitrators, with the intention only of preventing practices which threatened to exterminate the seals altogether.

But while specific questions were creating some degree of friction between mother country and colonies, the conception of imperial unity had been gaining ground considerably, and an epoch was marked in the relations of the different parts of the Empire when the celebration of Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887 gave occasion for a conference in London for the first time between the chiefs of the imperial government and representatives of the colonies. There was no premature attempt to bring forward schemes of federation, or indeed to formulate schemes at all; but an immense impulse was given to the conception of imperial unity by the mere recognition of the fact that the whole Empire has common interests and common burdens in which the whole Empire should be consulted, and in which the whole Empire should share. Between 1885 and 1895 events were taking place in one portion of that Empire which were about to issue in startling developments. During the decade Ireland had been the absorbing topic; in the next period the primary interest was to be transferred to South Africa.



## III

## THE STORM CLOUD IN SOUTH AFRICA

When Lord Salisbury took office for the second time the Liberal Unionists no longer declined a coalition. They were powerfully re-



Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.

[From a drawing by W. Hodgson, 1895.]

presented in the new Cabinet. Lord Hartington had some time previously succeeded to the dukedom of Devonshire, and the leadership of the party in the Commons had passed to Mr. Chamberlain, whose former militant Radicalism was being rapidly merged into an equally militant Imperialism, which caused his appointment to the Colonial Office to be hailed with satisfaction by all those who were inclined to condemn the indifference of colonial policy in the past. The now unqualified alliance of Lord Salisbury and the Duke of Devonshire in the Lords and Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamber-

lain in the Commons formed an exceedingly powerful combination, which was the more effective as there were dissensions among the Liberal leaders and Mr. Gladstone had now completely withdrawn from parliament.

Colonial affairs were no longer to permit of indifferentism. Before the ministers met parliament in January 1896 came news from South Africa that Dr. Jameson had entered the Transvaal at the head of an armed force, and that after a short engagement he and all his men had become the prisoners of the Boer government. Since the retrocession in 1881 the British public had very nearly forgotten South Africa; but this unexpected incident, coupled with an impassioned war song from the pen of the poet



laureate, startled it into a renewed interest which was rapidly intensified as the situation developed.

The retrocession had been followed by the London Convention in 1884, which, while unfortunately indefinite on certain points, expressly precluded the Transvaal government from forming relations of its own with any foreign Powers, or from territorial expansion. In the old days any determined disposition on the part of the Boers to extend their borders in the interior would have probably been allowed entirely free play. But a new spirit was abroad, incarnate in the person of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, an Englishman who had gone to South Africa in search of health and remained there in pursuit of empire. Mr. Rhodes dreamed of a vast African dominion under the British flag stretching from the Cape to Cairo. His energy created a chartered company which acquired territorial rights, overthrew the Matabele king Lobengula, and cut off the Boer state from all expansion northwards. When the republic endeavoured to find an outlet to the sea, its enterprise was again checked, when the intervening territory was brought under direct British administration.

Now the Transvaal Republic might, like the Orange Free State, have simply remained as a small shut-in self-governing state without creating any disturbance. But the Transvaalers were the sons of the stalwarts who fifty years before had sought to escape from all British control. They looked upon South Africa as a Dutch not a British inheritance; they resented the limitations imposed on them by the British, and their experience had not taught them any respect for the British Empire. Their president, Paul Kruger, had himself gone on the great trek in his boyhood. It is not possible to doubt that President Kruger dreamed his own dreams of a United South Africa, but a South Africa under a Dutch flag, not under the Union Jack; though how far those dreams were shared by others is not equally clear. But whatever his ambitions outside the Transvaal, within the borders of the republic he intended to go his own way.

In 1885, however, the discovery was made of valuable goldfields within the territories of the republic; aliens, Uitlanders as they were called, for the most part British subjects, whatever their actual nationality might be, poured into the Transvaal to exploit the mines. The Boer government had no objection to the exploitation of the mines on its own terms, which did not include the concession of citizenship to the Uitlanders till after a very prolonged residence. All the burdens of citizenship were laid on the Uitlanders without its privileges. The Uitlanders began to feel that they had no security for justice, and to demand approximately the opportunities for acquiring citizenship in the Transvaal which were readily accorded to the Transvaaler who migrated into British territory. The objection of the Boer to admitting the Uitlander to political power was natural for obvious reasons. The Boer population was small; if residence there was made too attractive to the aliens they would soon outnumber the legitimate



inhabitants and, possessing full political privileges, would come to control the government. But there was an obvious retort also, that the Uitlanders' demand for political rights would cease to be active if in other respects they received fair play. The strength of the Uitlanders' case lay in the unjust burdens which were imposed on them.

Superficially, then, the attitude of the two sides may be stated thus. The Uitlanders complained that they were admitted to the Transvaal only under grossly oppressive conditions, which could be remedied only by the ready concession of full citizenship. The Boers replied that the Uitlanders came unasked, and if they disliked the conditions on which they were admitted they might stay away; to which the only possible answer was that the conditions imposed were such as no civilised state is warranted in imposing upon civilised immigrants. But behind the direct issue between Boers and Uitlanders events demonstrated that other motives were at work. President Kruger was aiming at consolidating a Boer state which should take the lead in establishing a Dutch ascendancy in South Africa, while Mr. Rhodes and his associates were planning to utilise the trouble in the Transvaal in order to establish a British ascendancy within the Transvaal itself. The rash haste of Dr. Jameson, the administrator of Mashonaland on the western border of the Transvaal, brought on a crisis prematurely and, in the historic phrase of Mr. Rhodes, "upset the applecart." Misled into the belief that the Uitlanders were ready to rise in arms, Dr. Jameson made his dash on Johannesburg. The Uitlanders were not ready to rise, the invaders were enveloped by a superior force of Boers, and the Jameson Raid ended in a complete fiasco.

The first news of the raid excited enthusiasm in England, for there was a general belief that the raiders had nobly taken their lives in their hands and rushed upon their fate in the desperate hope of rescuing their countrymen and countrywomen in Johannesburg from the vindictive brutality of the Boers. The excitement was increased by the publication of a telegram of congratulation from the German Kaiser to the President of the Transvaal. But the gradual realisation of the character of the blunder which had been committed created in place of the first sentiment a sense of indignant impotence. A very strong case for intervention had been given away by sheer recklessness, and Mr. Kruger took full advantage of the situation. The raid was a piece of absolutely lawless aggression on the part of a responsible British official, for which it was quite impossible to produce reasonable justification. The Uitlanders' lives had not been in danger; the raid had not been the outcome of a generous impulse; all the principles of international law would have warranted the sternest treatment of all the participators. But the politic president handed over the raiders to be tried by the British, and imposed no excessive penalties upon the Uitlanders who were concerned. He had been gratuitously furnished with a complete answer to all appeals, protests, or demands; and his position was still further strengthened when a public enquiry was held in England, in which



it appeared impossible to question that the chiefs of both political parties connived at the suppression of any really searching investigation. If the British public felt dissatisfied, the Boers only saw a more convincing proof that the raid had been the abortive outcome of a great conspiracy against their liberties, with the British Government at the back of it. That conviction, it may be remarked, was generally shared on the European Continent.

On the face of it, if Mr. Kruger wanted nothing more than to secure himself against British interference in the administration of the Transvaal, it merely remained for him to make some small concessions to the Uitlanders as a further demonstration of magnanimity. Instead of this, however, he apparently resolved to use the raid as a lever for obtaining complete independence. In defiance of the Convention, he despatched missions to Europe and made treaties with Portugal, Holland, and the Orange Free State. By so doing he lost the advantage he had hitherto possessed of claiming that the British had, and he had not, overstepped the limitations imposed upon them respectively by recognised law. His treatment of the Uitlanders became more high-handed than ever. But even the raid could not be reckoned as a permanent counterpoise to all British and Uitlander grounds of complaint. Feeling, moreover, was running high in South Africa between the races, many of the Dutch in Cape Colony having become much more sympathetic towards the Transvaal government than they had been at an earlier stage. There was, therefore, very general satisfaction when the British Government despatched to South Africa a new High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, who bore the universal reputation of an experienced and exceptionally capable administrator, clear-headed, liberal-minded, sympathetic, and self-reliant.

Sir Alfred set about his task of investigation without haste and without prejudice. Nevertheless, it took him no very long time to form certain definite conclusions. The grievances of the Uitlanders were intolerable, and the only remedy for them was political enfranchisement. The Boer government was arbitrary, oppressive, and corrupt. There was something in the nature of a conspiracy to establish a Dutch ascendancy. It was time for the British Government to assert itself and to insist upon reforms. Any hesitation would only be attributed to weakness. If a firm front were shown it was not likely that the Boers would resort to arms; if they did, they would very promptly be taught the futility of resistance.

These views were adopted by the home Government in spite of urgent warnings from the principal military authority at the Cape, Sir William Butler, that immense forces would be required to make compulsion effective. Sir William had on other occasions advocated unpopular views, and bore in official circles the reputation which can only be expressed by the term "crank," and his advice was ignored. At the close of May 1899, then, Sir Alfred met President Kruger at the Conference of Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State. The negotiations failed. In effect Sir Alfred's



demand was that Uitlanders should be entitled to the franchise after five years' residence ; President Kruger was only prepared to submit to the "Volksraad" a proposal for enfranchisement after seven years' residence if, as a preliminary, the British gave an unqualified undertaking to abstain entirely from further intervention in the future.

In England the belief was perhaps general that the Transvaal would not fight, and that if it did the Orange Free State would stand neutral. In the Transvaal there was a general belief that the British would give way after one or two reverses, and that even if they did not Europe would intervene and compel them to submit. On October 9th President Kruger delivered an ultimatum requiring the immediate withdrawal of the British troops which had been assembled at points on the frontier. On the 12th the Boers crossed the Natal border in force and the great South African War began.

#### IV

#### THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR

The British Government entered on the struggle upon the basis of a huge miscalculation. There appears to have been a general impression that the Boers, on a liberal estimate, could not put as many as thirty thousand efficient men in the field, and that thirty thousand farmers armed with rifles would by no means be a match for fifty thousand British regulars armed with superior artillery. As a matter of fact the two republics could take the field with armies numbering not far short of eighty thousand ; and for years past the Transvaal had been utilising the wealth extracted from the gold-mines to accumulate war-stores and to purchase guns which completely outranged those of the British. Their forces were exceedingly mobile, being almost entirely mounted infantry, amply provided with horses which were accustomed to the country, while they themselves were consummate horse-masters and dead shots. Moreover, the strategical advantages enjoyed by the Boers were immense. Their frontier was an elongated semicircle guarded by mountain ranges exceedingly difficult for regular troops to penetrate ; while they themselves, holding the interior lines, could with great rapidity transfer large masses of troops from point to point of the frontier, an operation entirely impossible for the British. Also at the moment chosen for the declaration of war the British regular troops, of which the great bulk were merely infantry, numbered not much more than twenty thousand men ; and, for political reasons, two-thirds of these had been massed with complete disregard of strategical considerations at Ladysmith and Dundee in the northern angle of Natal. On the opposite side of the Orange Free State a strong garrison held Kimberley, the centre of the diamond mines, and to the north of Kimberley, on the Transvaal



frontier, Colonel Baden-Powell was at Mafeking with some nine hundred combatants under his command—volunteers and irregulars. Other points at the south were held by Generals French and Gatacre, but co-operation between these various forces was quite impossible.

Though the Boer commanders showed no little ability in the field, their conceptions of strategy were happily of an elementary character. The sound policy for them would have been to leave containing forces sufficient to check active operations from Ladysmith and Kimberley, and to strike at once in force at the Cape itself, a policy which, with the greatly superior numbers which they controlled at the outset, would have been entirely practicable. An invasion of the Cape would probably have brought to their standard large numbers of the disaffected Cape Dutch, and the British would in that case have had to reconquer the Cape itself. Instead of this, however, the Boers concentrated their energies upon the sieges of Ladysmith, of Kimberley, and of Mafeking.



The Terrace Mountain Ranges of South Africa.

At the very outset it became obvious that the British position at Glencoe near Dundee was untenable. By October 26th the force there had effected its retreat to Ladysmith, where the army remained shut up for four months. In November reinforcements arrived at the Cape under command of General Buller. The fact that Mr. Rhodes was at Kimberley had been extremely useful, because it had filled the Boers with an intense desire to capture that post and the person of the man whom they regarded as their arch enemy; so that Kimberley for them acquired a wholly fictitious importance. General Buller decided that both Ladysmith and Kimberley must be relieved; he himself undertook the campaign on the east, while that on the west was entrusted to Lord Methuen. The Boers contented themselves with occupying the ground beyond the Tugela, blocking the way to Ladysmith, while advanced forces were thrown out from the neighbourhood of Kimberley to block the progress of Lord Methuen.

In the second week in December came a series of disasters. After a sharp struggle, Methuen forced the passage of the Modder River, and on the night of the 10th he attempted to surprise the Boer General Cronje in the strongly entrenched position which he occupied at Magersfontein. The task was entrusted to the Highland Brigade. But the Highlanders advancing in the dark in close order, which in a night attack must be preserved



till the last moment, reached the enemy's lines before they knew they had done so. Suddenly, without warning, a storm of fire belched forth from the Boer entrenchments; in three minutes six hundred of the Highlanders had fallen. They broke, only to rally the moment they reached cover, but an advance was impossible. Though reinforcements presently arrived, to carry the entrenchments by a frontal attack was out of the question. The advance to the relief of Kimberley was completely blocked.

On the previous day General Gatacre in the south had attempted to strike at a Boer force which was at last invading Cape Colony. His force was cut in two at Stormberg, and six hundred British soldiers became prisoners of war. In the east on the 15th Buller attempted the passage of the Tugela, and was repulsed with heavy loss at Colenso. The whole offensive movement was entirely paralysed.

The "black week" aroused the nation to the consciousness of the immensity of the task which it had undertaken, but with grim determination it resolved to carry it through. The call to arms met with an eager response not only in the British Isles but from Canada and from Australasia. The veteran Lord Roberts, the hero of the Afghan War, was despatched to take the supreme command, having as his Chief of Staff Lord Kitchener, who had achieved the highest reputation by the reconquest of the Soudan, of which the story will presently be told.

It was not till the second week in February that Lord Roberts was ready to put his new plan of campaign in operation. In the meantime Ladysmith had been subjected to a fierce attack, beaten off with dogged valour. Again General Buller had carried a large force across the Tugela to storm and carry the Boer position at Spionkop—for it would seem that at the end of the day the Boers believed that the British were established on the crest, and were preparing to beat a retreat. But so deadly had the struggle been that the exceptionally gallant officer, who had taken the command when General Woodgate fell mortally wounded, believed that the position was wholly untenable; and it was the British, not the Boers who retreated. Yet Ladysmith still held out with grim resolution, Kimberley defied its besiegers in the west, while the lively and resourceful defence of Mafeking gave even a flavour of comedy to the great tragedy.

From the moment of the opening of Roberts' campaign the tide turned completely. Buller was left to fight his way to Ladysmith, but except for this the whole of the now large force collected in South Africa was to be engaged in a sweeping movement of invasion, taking Kimberley by the way. While attention was concentrated on the advance of the main army, General French, with a strong column of cavalry, was despatched on a race by a more easterly route to ensure the envelopment of the Boers before Kimberley. On the fourth day the siege was raised. The besiegers made a dash for the gap which the slower movements of Roberts with his infantry force had not yet closed up. But one British detachment was able to hang on the rear of the retreating Cronje, while the cavalry again issuing from



Kimberley headed him off the line on which he was retiring. At Paardeberg Cronje was trapped after a furious fight, and in spite of the obstinacy with which he held out in a position elaborately entrenched, his whole force was reduced to surrender nine days after the battle of Paardeberg, on February 27th.

While these successful operations were being carried on in the western theatre, Buller had at last found a practicable line of advance. This time the turning movement was successful, and on the day after Cronje's surrender the Boers were on the retreat from before Ladysmith. In seventeen



The surrender of General Cronje at Paardeberg.  
[From a photograph, by permission of the "Graphic."]

days the entire aspect of the war had been changed. A fortnight later Lord Roberts was in Bloemfontein. A great epidemic of typhoid delayed further operations until May 1st, when the march upon Pretoria began. On May 17 Mafeking was relieved, a piece of intelligence which sent the entire population at home temporarily off its head. On June 5th Lord Roberts was in Pretoria.

The sweeping advance met with occasional resistance, but the Boers were unable to attempt a pitched battle. Still, however, a detached force of Free-Staters, generally commanded by Christian De Wet, carried on perpetual raids upon the British communications and snapped up isolated



detachments; while the rapidity of De Wet's movements and the completeness of his information enabled him to evade pursuit. President Kruger had himself departed from Pretoria, but his official Government and the Transvaal army were still in being. A severe defeat was inflicted on this force at Diamond Hill on June 11th, which may be regarded as the last pitched battle of the war. And yet it was not till September that Mr. Kruger had so far despaired of the republic that he withdrew to the coast and took ship for Europe.

Lord Roberts, with a somewhat premature optimism, was able to announce that the war was practically over, and departed, leaving Lord Kitchener to complete the subjugation of the rebels who still remained in arms—rebels in the exceedingly technical sense that they were in arms against the power which had formally proclaimed its sovereignty. The chief political authority was still in the hands of Sir Alfred, who had now become Viscount Milner. At home Lord Salisbury took the opportunity for appealing to the country by a dissolution, when the electorate definitely pronounced that the work of settling South Africa should be completed by the Government which had entered upon the war. The attitude of a section of the Liberal party had produced an impression that whatever might be the sins and shortcomings of the Unionists it would be dangerous to entrust the government to a party which was suspected of an unpatriotic sympathy with the country's enemies. The Unionist majority after the general election still stood at 130.

Yet for another eighteen months the war remained particularly lively. The Boer leaders, so long as they were able to maintain a guerilla warfare, declined to consider themselves beaten or to accept anything short of that complete sovereign independence for which they had been fighting from the beginning. The brilliant audacity and resourcefulness of several leaders, and, above all, of the ubiquitous and irrepressible De Wet, inspired the hearty admiration of the British; while the conduct of many of the farm people, who acted as combatants or non-combatants according to the convenience of the moment, kept alive an acute irritation. The severities involved were angrily denounced; and while the population was to a great extent gathered into "concentration camps" by the British Government, and there maintained and kept in security, fictitious stories of British brutality were freely circulated and believed all over the European Continent. From first to last, however, one fact had been conspicuous. While the press of nearly all Europe united in denouncing the British, the Powers had recognised the futility of any intervention in a war which would involve fighting not with British armies but with British fleets. The British command of the sea was so decisive that the Powers, whatever their inclinations might be, had no choice but to leave the Boer States to take care of themselves.

Meanwhile Lord Kitchener, with imperturbable persistency, drew the lines of his block-houses across the country until he had at last formed an



impenetrable net, pressing ever closer and closer upon the Boers, who still fought on until at last that indomitable people recognised that extermination was the only alternative to submission. In March 1902 they opened negotiations, which were conducted on behalf of the British with unfailing tact and firmness by Lord Kitchener. On May 31st the provisional government signed the treaty which terminated the war. The republics were incorporated in the British Empire, in the first instance as Crown colonies, but with the promise or at least the hope that before long they might be placed in the same position as the colonies which enjoyed responsible government. Great Britain provided them with £3,000,000 in order to establish them on a working financial basis; and the use of the Dutch language was to be permitted in the schools and law courts. Broadly speaking, it was resolved that the conquered states should not be treated as subject nationalities which must be kept in subjection with a strong hand; the way was prepared instead for accepting them as free and loyal denizens of the British Empire.

## V

## THE SECOND SALISBURY ADMINISTRATION

The return of the Unionists to power in 1895 enticed one of the rising statesmen of that party to prophesy that there would be no more troubles with foreign Powers, which only took advantage of the weakness of Liberal Governments. The prophecy was hardly uttered before it was falsified. A dispute was already in progress with France in regard to Siam; and it was settled peacefully at the beginning of 1896 only because Lord Salisbury judged that the subject in dispute was not worth a war. In fact his diplomacy was habitually open precisely to the charge levelled against Liberals of making concessions in preference to insisting upon every claim for which a plausible justification could be brought forward. The plain fact was that the responsible leaders of both parties usually took very much the same view as to the general principles of action in foreign affairs. British interests were to be safeguarded, but an aggressive tone was to be avoided, and practical considerations were not to be over-ridden by abstract objections to the methods which other nations chose to adopt, or by a desire to check the natural craving for expansion on the part of other peoples than the British. The rule of avoiding isolated intervention was to be strictly observed. And these principles were not always to the taste of the advanced members either of the one party which was unduly hasty in discovering that British interests were involved, or of the other which was too eager that Britain should constitute herself not only the advocate but the fighting champion of oppressed populations and nationalities.



Thus in 1896 a grave situation was created by the threatening language of the United States, which in effect claimed the right to dictate the settlement of a boundary dispute between Britain and Venezuela; and extremists were far from being pleased when the case was submitted to arbitration. Lord Salisbury's justification was complete, when after long delays the award of the arbitrators confirmed the British view in practically every detail. Again in 1896 there was a great outburst of popular indignation over ugly stories of massacres by the Turks in Armenia. In spite of the agitation, however, Lord Salisbury refused an isolated intervention, wherein he was warmly supported by Lord Rosebery, who, partly in consequence of the line adopted by a large number of Liberals, at this time resigned the leadership of the Liberal party and assumed the rôle of a candid and independent critic. But if Lord Salisbury declined to send armies to Armenia, Britain could take a definite lead in another case, in virtue of her position as the premier naval power. In effect it was British interposition which saved Greece from paying the full penalty for challenging Turkey to a war in which she was very decisively worsted, and compelled the Turks to concede the establishment of an autonomous government in Crete with a Greek prince at the head of it in 1897. On the other hand, British diplomacy appeared to come off badly when the victory of Japan in a struggle with China led to a scramble among the European Powers for Chinese territory, and Russia appropriated some of the fruits of the war to which the Japanese seemed legitimately entitled. Lord Salisbury, in fact, did not want Chinese territory, though he desired and obtained from the Powers concerned the open door for commerce. Japan was to prove later that she was very well able to take care of her own interests.

Of much more importance than the remote East in the eyes of the Government was the position of affairs of Egypt. Since 1885 the Egyptian government had left the Sudan to itself. The Mahdi died in that year, to be succeeded by the Khalifa Abdullah, who continued to organise a sort of empire among the wild Sudanese. Now it was still in theory the desire of the British Government to withdraw from Egypt, but it was entirely obvious that a British withdrawal would leave Egypt a prey to the Khalifa. In 1896 it was resolved that in order to curb the dervishes, as the Khalifa's followers were called, it was necessary to push the Egyptian frontier to the south, up the Nile to Dongola. The jealousy of Russia and France caused those Powers to exercise their legal rights in restraining the Egyptian government from providing funds for a campaign. The money was therefore advanced by the British Government, and before the end of the year Dongola was occupied without serious resistance. But the advance had only made it clear that the time had really arrived for the reconquest of the Sudan. With systematic precision Sir Herbert Kitchener prepared his plans not merely for a campaign of victories, but for an effective strategic occupation. In 1898



the regular advance began, and in September the Khalifa's forces were completely shattered at the decisive battle of Omdurman. Abdullah, however, escaped, and it was not till the end of 1899 that the last resistance of the dervishes was finally crushed.

Omdurman itself was followed by an incident which threatened to bring about a war with France. A French expedition, commanded by Major Marchand, had started some two years before from the French Sudan. In the summer of 1898 the intrepid explorer and his party penetrated into the Egyptian Sudan and reached Fashoda, where they hoisted the French flag



The Palace of the Governor-General of the Sudan at Khartum.

and repulsed an attack on the part of the dervishes. It is impossible to question that but for the advance of Kitchener the little party would very soon have been annihilated. Hearing a report that there were troops commanded by white officers at Fashoda, Sir Herbert proceeded up the Nile, found Major Marchand at Fashoda, complimented him on his brilliant enterprise, and hoisted the British and Egyptian flags. The indignant Frenchman declared that Fashoda was French territory, on which the French flag had been hoisted before it was in occupation by the British; and French sentiment became greatly excited. But the fact was too obvious that Fashoda had not been in effective French occupation, and that Marchand would never have been heard of again if the dervish forces had



not been shattered by the British and Egyptian army. The French claims were ultimately withdrawn and the respective frontiers delimited.

In the sphere of foreign politics, as actively affecting this country, one



Egypt and the Sudan.

other event remains to be chronicled during this period. China had received a very rude shock in the Japanese War, and a series of further shocks when one after another of the European Powers forced treaties and conces-



sions upon her. At the same time a progressive party, which was becoming alive to the advantages possessed by Europeans, was temporarily dominant, and set about the introduction of a series of reforms by no means to the taste of the conservative Manchus, the dominant race to which the reigning dynasty belonged. A *coup d'état* restored the ascendancy of the Dowager Empress and the old régime, and very soon afterwards began what was called the Boxer rising, directed largely against Christians and "foreign devils." There was very little doubt that the movement was fomented by the government, although nugatory edicts were issued against the insurgents. The legations of the European Powers at Peking were besieged and cut off from all communication with the outside world; and the attempt to effect a relief by means of an entirely inadequate mixed force under Admiral Seymour failed. The relieving force itself had to be relieved. The Powers, working in reasonable concert, at length collected a sufficient force which marched on Peking under the command of the German Marshal Count Waldersee. Happily it was found that the legations had held out successfully. A heavy war indemnity was imposed upon the Chinese, and the incident terminated without any rupture among the Powers.



Queen Victoria, 1837-1900.

[From a photograph by Bassano.]

In India the most prominent events were the two disastrous famines of 1897 and 1900, a severe and prolonged outbreak of the bubonic plague, and a somewhat exceptionally severe period of campaigning among the tribes in the north-west frontier presently followed by the organisation of a frontier province separate from the Punjab.



In the sphere of domestic legislation Ireland again had its turn. Home Rule was for the time being put entirely out of court, and the still unhealed division in the ranks of the Irish Nationalists kept that party comparatively inactive. It was the main business of the Unionists to demonstrate that the people of Ireland could still be sympathetically and satisfactorily governed without having a legislature of their own at Dublin. Mr. Chamberlain had not departed from his old desire to extend to Ireland methods of self-government which should not involve the separation of the legislatures. On the land question, while there was sufficient variety in the ideal solutions which individuals were inclined to propound, everyone wanted to improve the lot of the tenants without inflicting undue loss upon landlords. The main difference between the two parties was that one was somewhat more anxious on the landlords' behalf and the other on that of the tenants. Hence the Government introduced a Land Bill with the usual object of improving the facilities for land purchase. Being favourably received by the Nationalists, it was denounced by the Irish landlords as a betrayal of their interests. Being modified in their favour, it was denounced again with equal fervour by the Nationalists. Ultimately the withdrawal of sundry amendments left the landlords sore and the Nationalists on the whole pacified. This Land Act of 1896 was followed by the Local Government Act of 1898, which established elective county councils and district councils. The working of the Act in Ireland has not differed conspicuously from the working of the earlier Local Government Act in England.

Here, however, the Unionists were not altogether satisfied with their own handiwork. The London County Council had exercised the powers bestowed upon it with an activity which inspired alarm in Conservative quarters. A new Act broke up the great municipality into a number of boroughs, to which a portion of the powers of the London County Council were transferred.

Three other measures demand brief notice. In 1896 an Agricultural Rating Act was passed to diminish the pressure of the rates upon the land. Ostensibly it was intended to relieve the tenant; in actual practice it was no doubt the landlords who benefited. A comprehensive Education Bill was introduced in the same year, but its extremely complicated character compelled its withdrawal, and a simpler bill was introduced in the next year. In effect the intention was to free the voluntary or denominational schools from the disadvantages under which they stood as compared with those schools which were entirely supported out of public funds. The schools were relieved from liability for the rates, and were given a substantial capitation grant, while the Church authorities still retained complete control of the management. The Opposition denounced the measure as appropriating public money practically in order to foster the denominational teaching of the Established Church, as they denounced the Agricultural Rating Act as a "dole" to the landlords.



The third measure was an Employers' Liability Bill, making the employers in certain trades responsible in case of injury to their workmen, but this also was denounced by the Opposition on the ground that it permitted contracting out and was therefore practically valueless to the workmen.

The clamour of the general election of 1900 had hardly died down when the nation was plunged into mourning by the death of Queen Victoria in the sixty-fourth year of her reign, the longest in our annals. The parliamentary situation however was not affected. The Liberal party was virtually paralysed by the extreme divergencies among both leaders and rank and file on the subject of the Boer War; and although on all sides there were wrathful denunciations of the blunders and miscalculations of which the administration had been guilty in the first stages of the struggle, the country had very definitely refused to displace ministers in favour of a party so divided on the most important issue of the hour. When at the end of 1901 Lord Rosebery emerged again into activity, it seemed for the moment that the bulk of the Liberals and a large proportion of those who had only supported the Government *faute de mieux* would be ready to unite under Lord Rosebery's banner, but that statesman had no wish to create a party of his own. When it became clear that it would not be possible for him to act in harmony with the official Liberal chief, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, he reverted to the position of candid friend. But his intervention had not been without effect in emphasising the general feeling that more serious and more tactful efforts must be made to bring the hostilities to an end.

Though Lord Rosebery had failed to re-unite the Liberals, their differences were in fact connected very much more with the past than with the future. When once the war was over there was nothing really to prevent a reunion, since the imperialist section had rejected the temptation to organise itself as a separate party. The Government made haste in 1892 to provide the Opposition with a bond of union by bringing in a new Education Bill, which was unanimously condemned by every section of the Liberals. More decisively than ever the bill asserted the principle of retaining the entire management of voluntary schools under clerical control, of preserving religious tests for the teachers, and of paying the greater part of the expenses out of public funds. But before the measure became law Lord Salisbury had retired from office and Mr. Arthur Balfour had become Prime Minister.

Here must be added the record of an important step on the part of the colonies, taken in the last year of the century. The Australian group federated themselves as the Australian Commonwealth, on the analogy of the Canadian dominion; although, as Newfoundland continued to stand outside the Canadian federation, so New Zealand continued to stand outside the Australian federation. This may perhaps be taken as the moment when it began to be recognised that the term "colony" was ceasing or had ceased to be properly applicable to the autonomous states of the British



Empire. Thenceforth it gradually became customary to speak of them not as the Colonies but as the Dominions.

## VI

## TRANSITIONAL

Until the accession of Queen Victoria, the longest reign in our history had been that of her grandfather, King George III., which had covered a period of sixty years. During the last ten of those years he had suffered a living death and had taken no part in public affairs. Queen Victoria had reached her eighty-second year when she died with faculties unimpaired and in the enjoyment of a popular loyalty which had perhaps never been higher. The celebration of her jubilee, the fiftieth year of her reign, thirteen years before, had been the occasion of great public enthusiasm; and it had been used to assemble together from all parts of the empire such a gathering of her subjects as had vividly impressed the people of England with the sense of imperial splendour. That impression had been more than confirmed ten years later by the celebration of what was called the Diamond Jubilee. The pageantry of these great functions appealed to the general imagination, and perhaps did more than any amount of reasoned discourse to give life to the new spirit of imperialism—a sense that the British Empire is something more than a number of red spots on a map. That consciousness was still further vitalised when the South African War displayed the deep-seated devotion of the dominions overseas to the British flag. The Great Queen died before the war-cloud was dispersed, while the future of one great section of her vast dominions was still gloomily uncertain; but she had lived to see the old indifferentism pass, and to know that her empire was united as it had never been before. When she came to the throne the Crown had lost its hold on the affections of the people; it had been her task to regain for it the loyalty of the nation. She had made no attempt to recover for it the powers of control which had passed for ever to parliament, but she created for it a moral influence which remains a vital factor in the national life. Her personal withdrawal from public functions after the death of the Prince Consort diminished for a time the ornamental value of the monarchy; but even when she was least before the public eye her ministers relied upon her political sagacity, and her judgment influenced the councils of the monarchs of Europe. England has known four queens regnant in the course of a thousand years; it is noteworthy that the reigns of three out of the four have covered some of the most conspicuously brilliant periods of the national history. Queen Anne indeed can claim little credit for the glories of her age, but Elizabeth and Victoria both stand beside and perhaps above the greatest of all our kings.



Less than three years before Queen Victoria died Mr. Gladstone, who had first entered parliament five years before the queen's accession. He attained Cabinet rank in Peel's ministry fifty years before he formed the last administration of which he was himself the head. For very nearly thirty years he was the acknowledged chief of one of the two great parties, at least if we disregard his temporary abdication during Lord Beaconsfield's rule. In the last three years of his life he had only once been stirred to public utterance, and sufficient time had elapsed for his political opponents to discover in him virtues previously unsuspected. Endowed with an extraordinarily persuasive eloquence, an extreme intellectual subtlety, and an intense moral fervour, he applied ethical standards to political life with a surprising courage which it would be difficult to parallel. Like his master Peel, he spent his life in assimilating one after another ideas to which he had at first been strongly antagonistic. His weakness lay in that excessive intellectual subtlety which made it easy for him to persuade himself that what he had come to regard as morally right was demonstrably expedient, and that what he realised as expedient was warranted by the highest moral sanctions. But whatever judgment future generations may pass upon his wisdom or upon his powers of self-deception, it will always be recognised that he imported into politics an insistence upon the doctrine that the highest morality is also the highest expediency, which has given him a unique position among the practical politicians of history.



Alfred Lord Tennyson.

[After the painting by G. F. Watts.]

Six years earlier passed away his great contemporary, Alfred Tennyson. It may well be that future ages will not recognise Tennyson as the greatest literary figure of his time in England; but this is certain, that he will always be the poet most representative of the Victorian Era. A consummate artificer in verse, his merely technical skill would give him high rank among the poets of any age; he taught to lesser men a style which made his own age peculiarly rich in minor poets, imitators of the master, who learnt to dress thoughts which did not rise above the commonplace in dainty and musical phrases. As distinctively as Pope he was the typical poet of his own day, not because he was a particularly profound thinker or a particularly deep student of humanity, but because he gave an almost perfect expression to the prevalent philosophy and the prevalent ideals of the time.



All the three great figures which have just been described were representative of the transitional period which politically was that of the passage from oligarchy to democracy. The arrival of democracy, the acquisition of political power by the hitherto unenfranchised masses of the community, was the essential change attained in the closing years of the nineteenth century, and the great problem now becoming of vital importance was how those newly enfranchised masses would organise themselves. One thing was certain, that for a hundred years past they had ceased to acquiesce in the existing distribution of the wealth of the community. They did not recognise the justice of the principles on which that distribution had been arrived at by practically unmitigated individual competition. They did not accept the theory that to disturb that distribution was an unwarrantable interference with the sacred rights of property. But for half a century the more intelligent of them, those who were employed in trades which required skill and intelligence, had been learning to organise themselves, and their leaders, the men who had organised them while they were still unenfranchised, were no revolutionaries. They relied upon combination to secure a gradual rise in wages, a gradual diminution in the hours of labour.

But a prolonged period of trade depression set in not long after the trade unions won their legal recognition in 1875. The result was that wages fell instead of rising, and the unions repeatedly found themselves unable to hold their own when they challenged conflicts with the masters. The result again was discontent on the part of large numbers of the working men with the acquiescent attitude of the trade union leaders, and that "new unionism" developed which not only called for much more aggressive action outside the legislature, but also demanded active state intervention; not as in the past to secure liberty of action for the workman, but to impose restrictions upon the employer. Labour in effect was to fight to obtain actual control of the materials and methods of production. In other words, the definitely socialistic doctrine that the democratically governed state, not private individuals, should own and control the materials and methods of production in the interests of the workers, began to challenge the old individualism on which the old unionism rested; the individualism which professed at least to desire nothing more than the right of unfettered combination for the workmen. As yet, however, socialistic doctrine was confined to a small though exceedingly active section; the old leaders still in the main held their own.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII

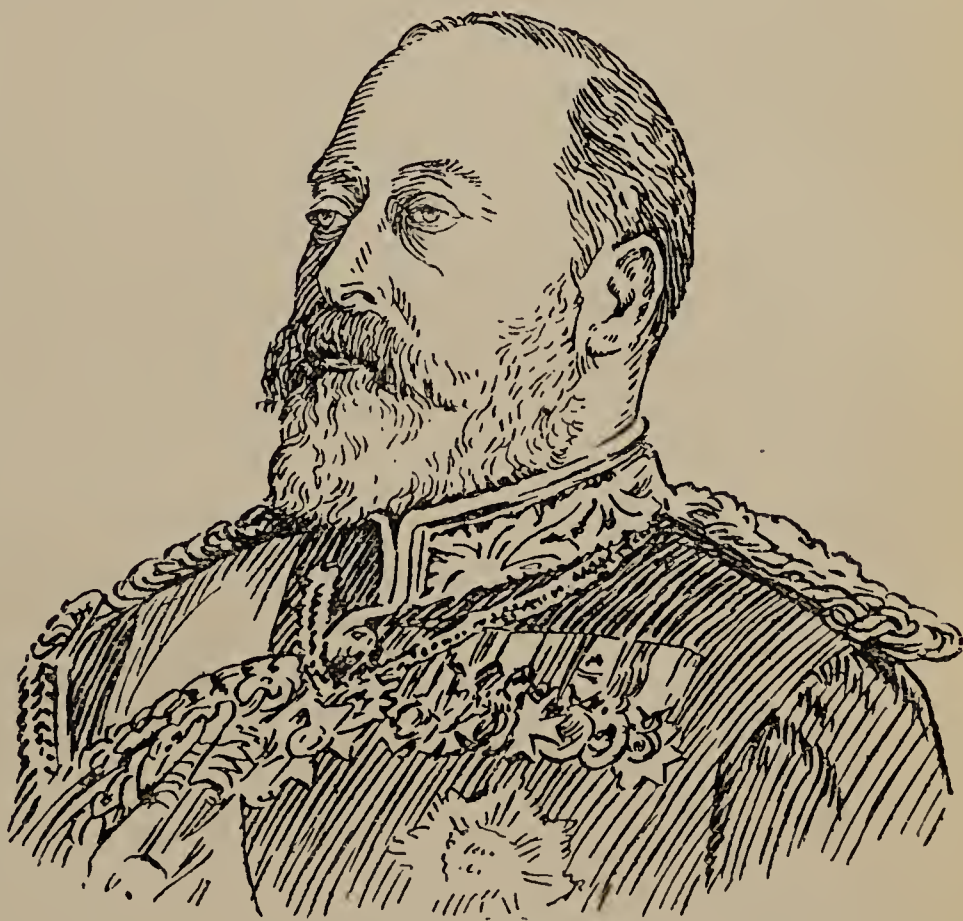
### EPILOGUE

#### I

#### UNDER KING EDWARD VII

THE first phase of present-day party politics began with Mr. Gladstone's declaration in favour of Home Rule for Ireland; the second began in 1903 with Mr. Chamberlain's challenge of the principles of Free Trade, which had been held by the country practically unquestioned for half a century. The parliamentary year opened pacifically with an Irish Land Bill, which achieved the apparent miracle of being accepted as satisfactory both by Irish landlords and Irish tenants. The miracle was accomplished because the British taxpayer provided the money and took the risks of the adjustment. But in the meanwhile the Colonial Secretary had been paying a visit to South Africa, whence he returned in the spring of 1903 with one altogether predominant idea in his mind—that the supreme task of statesmanship was to draw closer the bonds which held the great British Empire together. In comparison with this everything else sank into insignificance.

In May Mr. Chamberlain startled the world by proclaiming that one thing was needful to the consolidation of the Empire. The strength of the bond of sentiment had been nobly demonstrated by the gallant bands of volunteers who had rallied to the flag in the war now happily over. But the bond of sentiment was not sufficient; it must be strengthened by interest, by what Thomas Carlyle called the "cash nexus." The United



King Edward VII.

[After a photograph by Lafayette, Dublin.]



Kingdom must be prepared to make some economic sacrifice in the interest of the Dominions. The new bond was to be provided by the creation of a preferential market in Great Britain for colonial goods.

No one in effect for fifty years had dreamed of reviving tariffs on imports. Tea, alcohol, and tobacco, and a few other articles, continued to be taxed for purposes of revenue, but no advantage was given to home or colonial producers of the taxed articles. In pathetic isolation Mr. Chaplin had pleaded for the protection of agriculture, and for a brief moment an attempt had been made to raise the cry of fair trade, retaliation, and "making the foreigner pay." No one had taken these things seriously. But when Mr. Chamberlain spoke it was impossible not to take him seriously. Covert Protectionists emerged from their despairing silence, men who had been bred if not born Free-Traders began to reconsider the arguments which they had never thought of disputing. Others whose economic faith was unshaken began to think that the economic sacrifice might after all be less than the political gain. The few Liberals who became immediate converts became also the most uncompromising and enthusiastic of the advocates of fiscal reform.

But after the first shock of surprise there were no more defections among the Liberals from economic orthodoxy. Nothing perhaps could have been conceived better calculated to close up the ranks of an Opposition which as yet had only partly recovered from its disintegration. The salient fact fastened upon was that no preferential tariffs would be of appreciable value to the dominions unless food-stuffs and raw materials were taxed in their favour, since their manufactures were practically a negligible quantity. To tax food-stuffs and raw materials would raise the price of the working man's food and the cost of production to the home manufacturer, who was dependent on foreign supplies for his raw material. There were many Unionists as well as Liberals to whom that argument appealed with great force. But when once Mr. Chamberlain had broken with the principle of Free Trade the attack upon it was developed all along the line. First it was urged that the tariffs would provide a revenue which might be appropriated to a scheme for granting Old Age Pensions, which Mr. Chamberlain had long advocated in the abstract. Then Mr. Balfour began to perceive a possibility that tariffs, though undesirable in themselves, might be used as battering-rams for breaking down the tariff walls raised against British goods by other countries. Moreover, it was not so clear that tariffs would raise prices. It was argued that the foreigner would pay; he would lower his prices in order to keep his goods on the British market. Finally, the unqualified argument for Protection was brought into play. The competition of cheap foreign goods was on the verge of bringing to ruin the British producers. The industries which were thus suffering could only be saved by a tariff on the foreign articles—especially such as were "dumped" at less than cost price by bounty-fed producers—which would enable the British producer to sell at a profitable rate. Thus these in-



dustries would provide increased employment for the British working-man. The answers given to these respective arguments were that as a matter of experience retaliation does not reduce hostile tariffs ; that we already purchase from the foreigner at bottom prices, and therefore he would not reduce them in order to meet the tariff ; that the argument for pure Protection came to nothing at all if the foreigner paid the tariff and supplied us as cheaply as before ; whereas, if Protection was rendered effective because it raised the price of the foreign product, it would also raise the price of the home product to the consumer. As for the argument that by protecting British industries employment would be increased, it was replied that the increased cost of all articles of consumption and especially of food would far more than counterbalance the supposed benefits to the workers.

From 1903 till the end of 1905 the battle raged. The Liberals grew daily more united, while Mr. Balfour vainly endeavoured to avert a complete split among the Unionists. Four prominent supporters of the Government, including the Duke of Devonshire, retired from the Cabinet. At last in December 1905 Mr. Balfour resigned ; Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman accepted office, and immediately afterwards appealed to the electorate. The result was overwhelming. The Liberals were returned with a solid majority of eighty-four over all the other parties put together ; and even of those parties they could count generally on the support of more than eighty Irish Nationalists and more than fifty members who had been returned by the Labour party which for some years past had been steadily organising itself. The whole body of the Unionists numbered less than one hundred and sixty. But it must be remarked that the Liberal leaders were expressly pledged not to use their majority to deal with the question of Irish Home Rule ; while the fiscal reformers declared that the battle had been won largely on a false issue through the prominence given to the question of employing Chinese labour in South Africa.

It was admitted, then, by the Opposition that the country had for the moment pronounced decisively against fiscal reform, but only because it had not become thoroughly accustomed to the idea. It was not admitted that the country had intended to authorise any positive item in the Liberal programme. This view was naturally not accepted by the Liberals, who for precisely twenty years had had practically no voice in legislation, since in their last brief period of office all their measures with the exception of the budgets had been either eviscerated or thrown out by the House of Lords. Almost at once they embarked upon an extensive programme of reforms. They began by accepting a bill from the labour party for the protection of trade unions. It will be remembered that the Act of 1874 was supposed to have protected trade unions from being sued as corporate bodies ; but in 1903 a judgment of the law courts known as the Taff Vale Decision had shattered this impression. The Act of 1906 was intended simply to establish as law what the world at large had supposed to be the law for nearly thirty years.



The next step was a bill to abolish plural voting ; that is, to prevent one person from recording a vote in more than one constituency. On the ground that this was merely a party move, since it was notorious that the great majority of plural voters were Unionists, and also on the ground that such a change should not be introduced except in association with other changes readjusting the existing unfair distribution of voting power, the bill was thrown out by the Lords.

Then the Government attacked the education question, in accordance with the demands of nonconformists. Voluntary schools where the education was conducted on a denominational basis were not to be supported out of public funds. If they could not be maintained, the local authority was to have power to take them over, to assume the control, and to give the undenominational teaching which, from the point of view of Anglicans and Roman Catholics, was rather worse than purely secular education. The Lords made drastic amendments which the Government would not accept, and the bill was dropped.

In 1907 the programme was less aggressive. The budget however had two new features. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Asquith, for the first time dropped what had long been the fiction of professing to regard income tax as a source of revenue with which the country might presently dispense. Accepting it then as a permanent source of revenue, Mr. Asquith modified it by reducing the amount to be paid on incomes which were directly earned as compared with incomes derived from real property and from investments.

The great measure of the year was Mr Haldane's scheme of army reform, which aimed at producing the maximum of efficiency without departing from the principle of voluntary recruitment. No party in the state had hitherto ventured to commit itself to approval of any of those schemes for compulsory service which were in general urgently demanded by military men in view of the huge armies controlled by the European nations. The main point of the scheme was the reorganisation of the militia, the yeomanry, and the volunteers into the body known as "territorials." So far the scheme was viewed with very general favour except by those who were prepared to denounce any scheme which failed to provide for compulsory service. Criticism was mainly directed against certain reductions in the regular army for foreign service, and in the garrison artillery ; while it was urged on the other side that the reductions meant nothing more than the removal of inefficients, and that in effect the regular army was rendered not a less but a more efficient striking force. This appears to have been admitted by the experts, even although they resented the actual reductions as unnecessary. A more aggressive warning note was struck by the Government resolutions pronouncing that the powers of the House of Lords in rejecting and delaying legislation ought to be restricted.

In 1908 the party battle again waxed furious. The retirement and



death of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman removed a leader whose tact and management had during his term of office won for him an admiration and affection such as no one had previously looked for. His successor, Mr. Asquith, had been the acknowledged chief of the imperialist section of Liberals, and for the moment there were doubts whether the party would retain its solidarity under his captaincy. Very soon, however, it became apparent that there was to be no abatement in the Liberal demand for reforms. The reconstructions of the Cabinet gave an increased instead of diminished prominence to the more Radical element, while there was no sign that the so-called Whigs were at variance with their colleagues.

The first measure was indeed hardly controversial, since Unionists even more than Liberals had been pledged to provide pensions for the aged poor so soon as the national revenue should be able to bear the burden. Such opposition as the Old Age Pension Bill met with was based on the argument that the money would be better applied to strengthening national defence, or else upon the view that the scheme ought to be contributory—that the pension should be a reward of thrift, not bestowed on the thrifty and thriftless alike.

The Government returned to the attack on the Education question, a subject on which it was a sheer impossibility to take a popular line. The attempt was made to find a middle way which both denominationalists and undenominationalists could conscientiously accept. The proposal was that in areas where there was only one available school the regular religious instruction should be of the undenominational order, with facilities for denominational instruction to be given outside the school hours. But, in spite of prolonged negotiations, it was found to be impossible to arrive at any scheme which could command general assent, and the bill was after all withdrawn.

Fiercer still was the controversy over a bill which was to reduce systematically the number of houses licensed to sell alcoholic beverages. In a period of fourteen years one-third of the existing licenses were to be extinguished, but compensation was to be provided by a fund levied from the trade itself. After the fourteen years it was to be recognised that the licence would be granted for one year only, carrying with it no sort of right to count upon its renewal. The whole energies of the licensed trade were devoted to a vehement campaign against the measure; ministerialists lost seats at several bye-elections; the House of Lords were encouraged to believe that the Government had lost the confidence of the country and would be defeated in a general election, and the Peers rejected the bill.

Still the Government, like its Unionists predecessor, refused to regard bye-elections as a proof that it ought to resign, or, still more positively, to admit the title of the House of Lords to force an appeal to the country. In 1909 the gage of battle was flung down more emphatically than ever in the Budget introduced by the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr.



Lloyd George. The announcement that the naval programmes of foreign Powers necessitated an immensely increased expenditure on armaments met with an extremely reluctant assent from the economists in the Liberal ranks, while the programme put forward was stormily denounced as utterly insufficient by the Opposition. The Government stood to their view that their demands did not go beyond what was required by a reasonable prudence, but were at the same time adequate.

But the increased expenditure demanded an increased revenue. The rejection of the last year's Licensing Bill was met by greatly increasing the cost of licenses ; thus the liquor traffic was to be laid under contribution. An increase of the duties on tobacco and on spirits would levy a contribution from the working man. Wealth was to contribute by an increase of the tax upon incomes exceeding £5000 a year, and of the death duties. But above everything else a new tax was to be laid upon land by the appropriation of a portion of what is called the Unearned Increment; that is, the increased value of property brought about not by the action of the proprietors but by external circumstances—a scheme which involved an immense and complicated system of revaluation. The Budget, warmly applauded by Radicals who since the days of John Stuart Mill had claimed that the unearned increment was a fair and just source of taxation, was received with a storm of indignation by the landholders and the licensed trade. The House of Peers accepted the Government's challenge. It was admitted that they could not amend a money bill ; it was admitted, on the other hand, that they had the constitutional right to reject such a bill in its entirety. They acted upon their technical right, in spite of strong protests from Lord Rosebery and others who detested the Budget itself, and threw out the Finance Bill.

Ministers, then, were obliged either to remodel the Budget so as to make it acceptable to the Peers or else to appeal to the country. But the question was no longer one as to what were the constitutional powers technically possessed by the hereditary chamber ; now it was, whether it should be permitted to retain those powers. If the rejection of the Budget were to be accepted as a precedent, the Lords would at all times be able to force a dissolution. The Lords, it was argued, had ceased to exercise their proper function as an independent revising chamber, and had become simply an instrument of one party. While the Conservatives were in office they could legislate to their heart's content ; while Liberals were in office they could carry no legislation which did not command the assent of the Opposition. Ministers appealed to the country, with an emphatic declaration that no Liberal Government could in future remain in office until the powers of the Lords were so curtailed that finance should be removed entirely from their control, and that they should no longer be able to prevent the expressed will of the House of Commons from becoming law within the period of a single parliament. The general election was fought on the triple issue, the Budget, Tariff Reform, and the Abolition of the



Veto of the House of Lords. The result was a considerable increase in the number of Unionists, since many of the Free-Traders who had voted against them at the last election considered that in the choice of evils Tariff Reform was less dangerous than Mr. George's financial methods. Nevertheless the Unionists were still outnumbered by the Liberal party itself, while for practical purposes that party could count on the solid support of the Labour members and of the now thoroughly reunited Irish Nationalists.

The advanced Radicals undoubtedly supposed that the first measure of the Government would be a bill abolishing the veto of the House of Lords, and that the king had given a guarantee that the Lords would, if necessary, be compelled to yield by an overwhelming creation of peers. There was some indignation when it was announced that the government of the country must be carried on and the Budget must be passed before anything else could be done. Resentment grew among the extremists when it became known that the guarantees had not been given, and that ministers would formulate their plan before seeking to obtain them. In the great crisis which had now arrived it was felt that everything turned upon the profound political sagacity of King Edward VII., a sagacity which had won universal recognition. But even at that momentous hour the hand of death fell. The strain of anxiety had broken the king's health. On May 5th men read with startled alarm the announcement that he was seriously ill. The next day bulletins announced that his condition was critical, and just before midnight he passed away.

In South Africa after the treaty of 1902 British supremacy was no longer in question. Nevertheless the war appeared to have been only the culminating phase of a long period of racial antagonism. A very large proportion of the British in those regions were still naturally suspicious of the Dutch, and were strongly opposed to any early extension to them of real political power. In the view of Unionists at home, and of the former High Commissioner, Lord Milner, it was only by slow and tentative steps that it would become safe to place the Dutch colonies on an equality with the British. With the Liberals however it had become an axiom, a cardinal article of belief, that among the white races restrictions upon political liberty are a disintegrating factor; that the loyalty of a people was to be won not by a cautious distrust but by a generous confidence, bestowed even at a considerable risk. The Liberals were no sooner in power than they resolved to take the risks in South Africa, and to bestow on the states with a mainly Boer population the full status of colonies with responsible government—it had not yet presented itself to the mind of any one that there was anything derogatory in the name of "Colony." Lord Milner's place had before this been taken by a prominent Unionist, Lord Selborne, who was nevertheless prepared loyally to give effect to the policy of the new Government. In spite of warning protests from the Opposition leaders, who declined to share the responsibility, Sir Henry



Campbell-Bannerman took the risks, and conceded responsible self-government to the Boers who had so recently been engaged in a desperate struggle against the might of the Empire into which they were now incorporated. Whether the act was recklessly rash or courageously magnanimous, it was justified by the event, at least so far as the experience of seven years can justify the formation of a definite conclusion on the subject. It was not misinterpreted like the retrocession of 1881, and it converted a people with an emphatically hostile tradition into loyal citizens of the British Empire. How far antagonistic elements had been harmonised was seen when the South



British Possessions in Africa, 1903.

African dominions, after prolonged deliberation, formulated a scheme for the federation of the Union of South Africa—like the Canadian and Australian groups—which was sanctioned by the imperial parliament in 1909.

In India the vigorous viceroyalty of Lord Curzon continued to be productive of much controversy. Suspicions that Tibet was entering into dangerous relations with Russia led to demands for a treaty with that mysterious state, whose conduct necessitated a military expedition which was completely successful in achieving its objects. Native sentiment was greatly excited by the partition of the province of Bengal. The reasons for the

excitement caused are not easily intelligible to any one who has not an intimate knowledge of Indian affairs. But the effect was to set on foot an agitation, not among the Mohammedans but among the Hindus of Bengal, which provided the Indian government with very grave problems of administration for at least five years to come. Lord Curzon's retirement, however, was brought about not by this but by very serious friction between the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener, in which the Unionist Government supported the latter. Lord Curzon's place was taken by Lord Minto, who, like Lord Selborne in Africa, found himself able to work in admirable harmony with Mr. John Morley, who became Secretary of State for India when the Liberals came into power. The agitation among the Hindus became so active, and the language of the native press so seditious, that there were loud outcries for severe repressive measures. Strong measures were, in fact, taken by Lord Minto and Mr. Morley, of a character much more drastic and arbitrary than could be



dreamed of in dealing with the Press in England. They were accordingly condemned by all those persons who declined to recognise any warrant for applying different governmental principles in India and in England ; while they were condemned with equal vehemence by another school as far too lenient, and a virtual encouragement of sedition. The Indian Government, however, went on its way undisturbed by the attacks of either wing, and again its conduct appears to have been justified by the results.

During the reign of King Edward VII. a remarkable change took place



Mr. John Morley in 1894.

in the relations between the United Kingdom and the European Powers. Almost unanimously Europe had accepted as undoubted facts the wildest of fabrications concerning the doings of the British in South Africa. Largely owing to the genial personality of the king himself, there was now a general disappearance of the prevalent sentiment of hostility. Hitherto the two Powers with whom the dangers of collision had been most serious were Russia and France. Almost throughout the nineteenth century antagonism between the British Empire and Russia had been a dominating factor in politics, while ever since the British occupation of Egypt there had been perpetual friction between British and French. At an early stage



of the great war between Russia and Japan, the extraordinary behaviour of a Russian squadron, bound for the Far East, in firing upon an innocent British fishing fleet, seemed almost to have made war inevitable. But the war was avoided, perhaps because of an unmistakable demonstration of the efficiency of the British Navy. The terrible disasters of the Russian struggle with Japan did much to dissipate the belief in Russian military power. The attitude of the two empires to each other became less suspicious, and there was a new inclination on both sides to attain the adjustment of clashing interests in a spirit of goodwill. This took shape in the most marked manner when an agreement was arrived at as to the treatment of Persia, which on the whole had the approval of both parties in England.

A visit of the king to Paris had an extraordinary effect in dissipating a popular French impression that British sentiment was actively hostile. An agreement with regard to Morocco and Egypt removed the most serious among the remaining causes of friction, and a spirit of warm friendship grew up between the two countries. Unhappily it has to be admitted that a less cordial spirit was engendered with another of the great Powers. The sudden determination of Germany in 1905 to develop a powerful navy aroused British alarm and suspicion; while the increasing goodwill between Britain, France, and Russia developed among the Germans a belief that the British were pursuing a deliberate policy of isolating Germany with presumably sinister intentions. The result was that each nation urged forward naval programmes manifestly with an eye to the suspected aggressive intentions of the other, while to each it appeared that the motive of the other was not self-defence but aggression. In well-informed quarters the idea that the German Emperor desired a war of aggression for the purpose of breaking up the British Empire was never credited; but in both countries a portion of the Press persistently maintained an inflammatory tone which greatly increased the difficulty of attaining a mutual understanding.

## II

1910-1912

At the moment of the accession of King George V. the country was in the throes of an acute constitutional crisis. The general election had proved that in Great Britain, apart from Ireland, there was a large majority of the electorate which demanded a modification in the character of the House of Lords. From all quarters schemes were being propounded for the composition of an ideal Second Chamber, since it was admittedly unsatisfactory that such a chamber should by its constitution be the instrument of one party. In the view of the Government the curtailment of the powers of the House of Lords was the first question, though its settle-



ment would have to be followed in due course by a reconstruction of the chamber itself. To those, however, who regarded it as a primary necessity that the Second Chamber should act essentially as a barrier to the flood of democratic legislation, the great need seemed to be a reconstruction eliminating those elements which deprived its judgments of weight—the strengthening rather than the diminution of its authority. When the Lords made it clear that they would not accept the Government scheme except under compulsion, the Government resolved that the king should not be called upon to apply compulsion until the country had definitely pronounced its approval of the scheme itself. At the end of the year parliament was dissolved, and the scheme was approved by a majority of the electorate practically identical with that which had returned the ministry to power in January.

The Parliament Bill of 1911 left the composition of the Second Chamber untouched, while pronouncing that the reconstruction was required. It touched the Commons only by reducing the life of a parliament to five years instead of seven, the period set by the Septennial Act almost two hundred years ago. It dealt directly with the veto of the House of Lords. For the future the rejection by the House of Lords of a bill passed by the House of Commons was to be effective for two years. If at the end of the two years the House of Commons again passed the bill it was to become law, whether there had or had not been a dissolution in the interval. It was made known that the king had been advised and had agreed to create a sufficient number of peers to secure the Government majority in the event of the bill being rejected by the hereditary chamber. A section of the Peers were prepared to die fighting, to reject the bill and to throw upon the Government the onus of destroying the traditional character of the Peerage. The calmer counsels of the leaders of the party prevailed, and the Parliament Bill became law. But the constitution of the hereditary chamber remained unaltered, and the Unionists very expressly declared their intention of dealing with the question on their own lines whenever they should return to power. The Parliament Act, therefore, can only be regarded as a temporary settlement pending the reconstruction of the Second Chamber.

That reconstruction the Government deferred in spite of the declarations of the Opposition that their doing so would be a breach of faith. Two other measures of constitutional importance were to take precedence of the next measure dealing with the House of Lords. One was to re-organise the distribution of votes among the electorate. This was to be effected in two ways, first by the abolition of plural voting, so that no one might vote in more than one constituency, secondly by reducing the term of residence necessary in order to enable a man to vote after changing his abode from one constituency to another. It was assumed on all hands that by the first the Unionist vote in the electorate would be reduced, and by the second the Liberal vote would be increased on



the hypothesis that many more of the shifting labouring population would be enabled to exercise the franchise.

The other measure was a bill for conferring at once upon Ireland a legislature of her own, but upon lines compatible with the ultimate introduction of similar measures for Scotland, Wales, and England, while retaining the supremacy of the imperial parliament. The presumed end in



King George V.

[After a photograph by Lafayette, Dublin.]

view was the substitution of a federation of the four nationalities in place of the unitary system, giving self-government to each and a common central government to all, analogous to the systems already established in Canada, Australia, and South Africa. This scheme met with a fervid opposition from the Protestant division of Ulster which feared a Roman Catholic ascendancy. It was certain that the second if not the first of these two bills would only become law if the Liberals should still be in office at the



end of two years and should again pass the bill without regard to the House of Lords.

The same expectation applied to a bill for the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Wales, which followed generally the precedent of the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland; the theory in both cases being that an Established Church is warranted only while it is unmistakably a National Church, whereas in Wales, as in Ireland, the majority of the population belonged to other communions. In both cases the opposition to disestablishment rested on the principle first that only through an Established Church can the state express its Christianity, and next that in any case the state has no right to appropriate ecclesiastical endowments which belong to the Church and not to the state.

While the Government were shouldering the responsibility of introducing a series of immense and far-reaching modifications in the constitution, they were zealous also in proceeding with the social legislation for ameliorating the condition of the masses, of which the necessity was studiously affirmed by all parties in the state. Following up the bill for conferring old age pensions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. George, introduced in 1911 a great scheme of National Insurance for wage-earners. Since a scheme for national insurance was in theory eminently desirable, all parties declared themselves ready to extend a provisional welcome to the bill; but any scheme would of necessity be exceedingly complicated, while in the nature of the case only a very limited number of persons in the country could be capable of forming a competent judgment on its financial soundness. There were moreover three fundamental questions on which the widest divergency of opinion was possible. Should such a scheme be compulsory? To what classes of the community should it apply? Should the whole cost be borne by the state, or should employers contribute, or should employees contribute as well? The Government decided that it should be compulsory, inclusive, and contributory. Consequently every detail of the bill met with strong opposition from one quarter or another, while almost the entire medical profession proclaimed that the medical benefits could not be provided at the scale of payment to which the Government declared themselves limited by the financial conditions. From the outset it was evident that the measure would not be popular; since the classes for whose benefit it was intended resented its contributory character, which would touch their pockets immediately, while only a prolonged experience would enable them to realise such benefits as they would obtain in exchange. Nevertheless the bill was carried and came into operation during 1912. The old Chartist demand for payment of members of parliament was at last realised by the provision of an annual stipend of £400.

Meanwhile the new unionism had been gaining ground among the working classes. The leaders of the movement would appear to have had the double aim of consolidating a Socialist vote in parliament, and of co-ordinating aggressive action on the part of trade unions, so that the battle



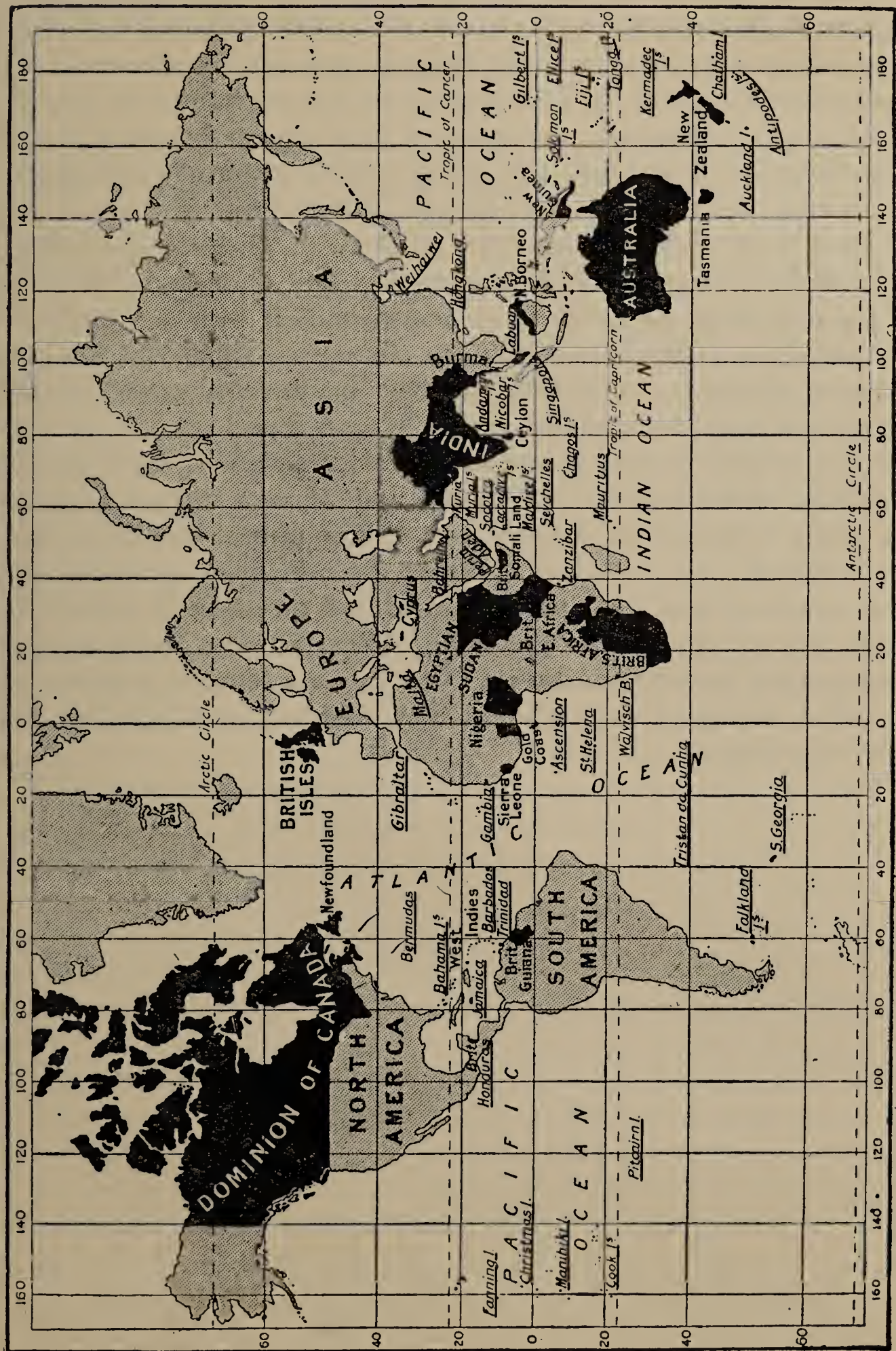
should no longer be between isolated employers and their dissatisfied employees, but that the whole forces of associated trades should be brought to bear to force the whole body of employers to accept the men's demands. A series of great trade disputes were adjusted by the disputants' acceptance of the mediation of the Board of Trade and the arrangement of compromises between masters and men. But in 1911 it began to be realised that in certain cases the general public as well as the particular antagonists were materially affected by the disputes. This began to be brought home by a strike of the railway men in the summer of that year, when it became evident that in certain employments a cessation of work might paralyse industries other than the one directly affected. Still more impressive was the great coal strike at the beginning of 1912, followed as the spring was passing into summer by a strike of transport workers. The public supply of fuel was cut off by one, and its supply of food was in danger of being cut off by the other. There was a general acquiescence in the principle that masters and men should be left to fight out their own private battles; but it began to be very seriously questioned whether that principle could be applied when those private battles threw out of work businesses which had no means of protecting themselves, and reduced the supply of the necessities of life for the general public. In the two former cases named the action of the Government brought the disputes to a close for the time being. In the third, Government merely tendered advice which was not accepted, and the strife was left to work itself out. In all three cases there was a commendable absence of disorder of the kind which is apt to accompany extensive trade disputes; but the successful treatment of two particular emergencies was not a solution of the questions which lay at the root of those emergencies, and ministers before long felt it necessary to pledge themselves to introduce legislation, probably on the lines of compulsory arbitration.

Outside the British Isles, but within the Empire, the most notable event was the visit of the king and queen to India. In that great dependency, what may be called the concluding act of the régime of Lord Morley and Lord Minto was the admission of natives of India to a larger share in the executive councils both of the central government and of the presidencies. The continuity of their policy was maintained by their successors, Lord Crewe at the India Office and Lord Hardinge in the vice-royalty. The disaffection which at one time seemed so threatening ceased to be prominently active, and the presence of the Emperor of India in the Peninsula appealed forcibly to the imagination of the natives, giving rise to very encouraging demonstrations of loyalty. The visit was signalised by the announcement that the ancient capital of the Moguls, and of imperial dynasties long before the Moguls, the city of Delhi, was to be restored to its old position.

On the subject of relations with the European Powers only a few words can be added. Russia, formerly feared as an aggressive military power,



when she was the special object of imperialist denunciation, had become instead the special aversion of advanced Radicals, chiefly because of the tyrannical methods of her domestic administration. She now adopted a



The British Empire to-day.

dictatorial attitude towards the Persian government, which appeared to be in contravention of the recent agreements, and it was chiefly from Radical quarters that the diplomacy of the British Government was denounced for



weakness in seeking to preserve friendly relations with a reactionary power at the expense of a helpless nation.

In 1911 there was a moment of intense anxiety when it appeared that relations with Germany had been strained almost to the breaking-point. A war between France and Germany seemed almost inevitable, the subject of contention being Morocco, until it became generally understood that in certain eventualities Great Britain would feel herself bound to give France effective support. Although the quarrel was adjusted before the public realised how great had been the danger of a general conflagration, in certain quarters in Germany the British attitude was resented; but the Governments both of Britain and Germany directed determined efforts to attaining a better understanding between the British and German nations. While the presence of chauvinistic elements made it impossible to view the European situation without grave anxiety, there were signs that the common sense of both nations would triumph, that the tension would be relaxed, and that mutual suspicions would gradually pass away.

Here our history closes, at a moment when solutions had been offered of two critical constitutional questions, and of one critical international question, while it would be rash to say that any one of the three had been definitively solved. At the same moment the industrial question appeared also to be reaching a critical point, and of that question it cannot be said as yet that any solution holds the field. This, however, may be said, that the British people has shown during these crises a temper, a power of self-control, and a disregard for inflammatory rhetoric, in which lies the best augury for the future.



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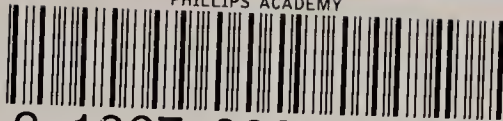
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